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REPORT TO THE  
TRUSTEES

BY

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NOVEMBER 1914—SEPTEMBER 1915,  
AUGUST—OCTOBER 1916.





## Introduction, 1919.

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GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present the following report of my travels during the years 1914 to 1915.

I had originally intended to travel through France, Germany, Austria, and Turkey prior to visiting the East and America. My wife was to accompany me during the early part of the journey, and perhaps the latter if it could be arranged.

We arrived in France in time to be sent home again almost by the next boat, owing to the outbreak of war. After a period of indecision we eventually decided to go to India in November, 1914. My wife took the opportunity of paying a long-promised visit to certain relatives in Australia, and after spending five months there was able to meet me again at Shanghai and accompany me from there home.

We arrived home in September, 1915. I had thus completed a tour of ten months instead of the twelve months which are prescribed.

Subsequently, in the summer of 1916, I was able to spend six weeks in France, during which time I made certain investigations into the efforts of that country to maintain food production under war conditions. The results of these investigations have already appeared in a separate publication.\*

Travelling was still an agreeable and comfortable occupation in 1914-15, and once I had reached India the war did not make any serious difference to my opportunities for enquiry. It was very different in 1916. Much of my time going to, coming from, and in France was devoted to standing in queues in compliance with passport and other formalities. At least I thought they were such until, on my way back, at Southampton, I was nearly arrested by a representative of Scotland Yard on the charge of being a Sinn Féiner, and possibly a German spy! I denied the charge with vehemence, and afterwards, on thinking it over, came to the conclusion that it must have been a vagary of some official in Dublin Castle, to whose mentality all not Orange is black.

Most of the following report was written in the year 1916. I cannot help feeling that much of it no longer possesses any special interest in view of the multitude of vital problems with which civilisation is now confronted. Consequently, the reader is advised to skip any portion that does not interest him. Since 1916 my ideas have developed very considerably,

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\* Food Production in France in time of War, published by Maunsell and Co., Ltd.

and if I were dealing with the same subjects now my treatment of them would probably be very different. It is not so much that my opinions have changed as that they have developed, but I dare say this is a common experience in view of the events of the last five years. It was impossible, even if it were desirable, to bring the Report up to date without re-writing large portions of it. However, I have indicated in footnotes those points with regard to which my views have radically altered.

In conclusion, I wish to express my gratitude to all those in different parts of the world who placed their knowledge and experience at my disposal.

In common with my predecessors, I have to thank Dr. Edwin Deller for his invaluable assistance in passing the MS. of this work through the Press, and for useful criticisms and suggestions which have materially improved the form of the work.

### Introduction, 1916.

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This work is written on no definite plan; as it was impossible for me to study each question exhaustively, there are some points which I may mention only in order to dismiss, others that I hope to deal with at greater length, and a few that I may attempt to discuss more or less comprehensively. Nor, on the other hand, do I propose to follow any definite order, either chronological or otherwise. I shall go wherever my thoughts lead me, with a general preference, however, for the order indicated by the logical development of the subjects from time to time under discussion. At the risk of appearing prolix, I may sometimes digress and refer more than once to the same thing. In general, if there is any one problem to which the work as a whole may be said to refer, it might, perhaps, be described as "Man in his relation to Society" and "Man in his relation to the Universe." Ever since Adam developed a taste for stolen fruit these questions have been constantly with us. The history of the rise and fall of civilisations is the history of the various attempts which man has, consciously or unconsciously, made to solve them. The first is the question round which all our social, economic, and political wranglings turn; the second concerns the deeper life of the spirit. Philosophers and leaders of religion will tell us that ultimately these two questions are one, but for practical purposes we shall have to deal with them as two, and as the writer is neither a great philosopher nor a great religious teacher, it may be advisable to devote considerably more attention to the first than to the second of these questions.

For many reasons, it is probable that neither will ever reach a final solution, but it is interesting to know what other nations have attempted and achieved in these matters, whether or not we are able to turn the lessons of their experience to practical account.

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*August, 1916.*

### **India—Some General Impressions.**

From the moment when one sets foot on Indian soil, which I did at Bombay on December 12th, 1914, one feels that one has stepped into a totally new world. The motley crowd of human beings that one meets in the streets, whose subdivisions according to race, religion, business, profession, social position, or caste are often clearly marked in their features and complexion, and almost invariably denoted, to the eye of the initiated, by their dress and general bearing, impress the stranger with the variety of the constituents of India's population, and at the same time with the complexity of the problems in which they are the human factors.

The city itself is one of the most Europeanised in India, yet even in the European quarter the preponderance of the Indian element in the streets is overwhelming. If the latter were absolutely deserted, there would be little difference in its outward aspect from an ordinary continental town. The prevalence of verandahs and arcades are what chiefly distinguish it from an English city.

By far the larger part of Bombay is made up of "bazaar" or "native quarter." Like New York, it has the good fortune, from the point of view of its ground landlords, to be situated on an island. The resulting congestion is almost incredible, but the problem is rendered on the whole less acute for its inhabitants by the warmth of the climate, from which it results that the greater part of their life goes on in the open air. The native houses are often very ramshackle constructions. The walls usually consist of sticks of wood set upright, with many a chink and crevice in between, which may or may not be plastered over and more or less filled up with mud. Of course, the character and appearance of the house vary with the wealth and pretensions of the owner. In the shopkeeping district the whole front of the house is open during the day. Instead of a verandah, an awning stretched across a portion of the street protects the shopkeeper and his customers from the glaring sunshine. The

former is usually to be found squatting in Oriental ease amidst a heap of his merchandise. How he can move without upsetting the whole lot is more than a European can understand. If he has to describe his position, say in giving evidence in a case, he will probably say, "I was sitting on my shop."

Here let me remark that one of the most noticeable points of difference between East and West is that in the West a man uses a chair to sit on and a bed to lie on, and would find it difficult to take up the latter and walk, whereas the Oriental, be he Indian, Chinese, or Japanese, can squat with his heels doubled up till they touch his hips, and can sit or lie and make himself comfortable in any position and in any attitude. I have often stumbled over the prostrate forms of native passengers slumbering on the ground at the entrance to a railway station. This faculty of sleeping when there is nothing else to do helps to take the edge off a good many of what, from our point of view, appear to be the hardships of their lot.

To return to my former subject. Though the houses in the native city are practically lived in only at night, occasionally the overcrowding, with its attendant evil of primitive ideas on the subject of sanitation, brings about epidemics of plague, which carry off large numbers of the population.

Many of the impressions of which the newcomer is most painfully conscious at first come through the sense of smell; if he is susceptible of any other, the teeming vastness of India's indigenous population as compared with the small number of white people who govern them will be emphatically borne in on him. If he expected to find Bombay a homogeneous city, even from the non-human point of view, he will be forced to change his opinion. The European and commercial quarter is absolutely distinct, both locally and in its outward appearance, from the Indian city proper. Both these facts are very significant, and suggest a few general considerations.

At first sight it seems surprising that a handful of Europeans, "a speck of foam in a vast and thundering ocean," should exercise dominion over such a multitude of human beings. Surely if the rule of the majority is the best, the continued rule of India by a few people from these islands in the name of a king whose throne has been fixed on the banks of the Thames is a perpetual miracle or a hopeless anomaly. The secret of the comparative stability of our Indian Empire is not to be found in the presence of a few tens of thousands of British troops, in the control of railways, or the command of the seas, but in the instinctive recognition by the Indian people as a whole that, after

centuries of internal strife, social anarchy, and foreign invasion, the social, moral, and political progress of India requires that our rule shall not come to an abrupt conclusion.\*

Good government may be no substitute for self-government, but it is a very good substitute for anarchy. I have no patience with the point of view of those who assert that our position in India is morally indefensible, since that people is held in subjection to an alien race. On national grounds it would be indefensible, but it requires more than living in the same geographical area to weld human beings into a nation, and India has not yet become one. The highest interests of humanity, and of India herself, require the continuance of British rule, at any rate for the present, and this is its sole and adequate justification.

When our position in India has become morally unjustifiable, it will by that time be a physical impossibility to maintain it any longer. These conditions do not yet exist, as all but the most extreme of Indian Nationalist politicians would admit. They might be brought about in two ways, either by a progressive deterioration in Imperial policy with regard to India and in the moral fibre of the men sent out there in various capacities from these islands, or by a continued development of the qualities of citizenship on the part of the Indians themselves. The final result of the first process would be the violent overthrow of the present system and a reversion to the anarchy from which India has just emerged. The second process, if guided and encouraged by a statesman-like and sympathetic rule, would lead to a realisation of the ideals of some of the most advanced of Indian political thinkers, and a final and amicable adjustment of relations between India and her present rulers.

From this point of view the results of our rule have, up to the present, been largely negative. Peace, order, and good government are very valuable possessions from whatever source derived, but, in themselves, they are rather the first condition and starting point for social and other forms of progress than a final consummation, with which all concerned should rest contented.

The desire for this further progress must, however, spring spontaneously from the Indians themselves. A foreign Government on Indian soil cannot actually produce it, though it may do much to hinder and pervert its natural manifestations. There is a corresponding obligation placed on those Indians who seek to promote the future well-being of their country, to see that the enemy which they attack is the real one, and not to attempt to build the edifice of Indian

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\* This was written before the Amritsar incident.

nationality from the roof downwards. The foundations of all real progress must be laid in the individual and in the social organism of which he is an integral part. An Indian member more or less in the Viceroy's or Secretary of State's Council is a matter of comparative indifference unless the additional power thus obtained is accompanied by an added sense of responsibility on the part of the Indian community as a whole.

In the whole of her history India has never yet developed into the kind of political community we are familiar with in Europe. In Greece and Rome the basis of citizenship was originally kinship, real or imaginary, and had a religious sanction; but as time went on this narrow conception was given up, and especially during the later Roman Empire millions who could lay no claim to a racial affinity with the founders of the Eternal City were freely admitted to the privileges of the Roman franchise. In modern nation-states a comparatively short period of residence within their bounds will qualify for admission to the citizen body.

In ancient India, for whatever reason, the process stopped short before the conception of kinship had been transcended. Society, instead of being amalgamated into real civic communities, was stereotyped and split up into innumerable fragments by the formation of successive layers of "caste." The claims of family and caste, sanctioned by religious usages and entrenched behind an impregnable barrier of immemorial custom, are such as to crush out all genuine individuality, and render their members almost unconscious of the existence of any wider social duty. If the divisions of caste rested on any moral basis or corresponded to any natural classification of the Hindu community, there might be something to be said in their favour; but whilst a member may be "outcasted" for dining with a non-Hindu or a Hindu of a different caste, he may, as a rule, commit with impunity the most serious offences so far as his caste-membership is concerned. The growth of Western ideas and the exigencies of commercial and factory life have modified to some extent the strictness of the caste principle, and new combinations for commercial and other purposes have come into existence in which the caste principle has had to be ignored. Nevertheless, the above description is true so far as the vast majority of Hindus are concerned.

The institutions of the Hindus have modified more or less effectively the social customs of the numerous other races who go to make up the Indian people, not excepting even the European element. There are four clearly marked divisions of the Mahommedan community, and even among people of European blood a line of demarcation is drawn between those who may automatically become members of a

station "club," those who may occasionally be invited there, and those who under no circumstances may darken its sacred portals. There is a somewhat similar distinction, but it rests on quite a different basis from the former, between the Anglo-Indians of pure European blood and those in whom the native element is perceptible.

India as a whole is thus a geographical expression rather than a country with common, or even mutually, reconcilable ideals and aspirations. One of the few common bonds is the common subjection to a foreign Power; in the case of the native States, who account for about one-fifth of the total population and over one-third of the total area, the relation is one of suzerainty; *de facto*, independence in internal matters is in most cases preserved. Every degree of civilisation, every form of social custom, every variety of religious life, from the most degrading superstitions to the most sublime beliefs, is represented in some portion or other of the Indian population. From this point of view India is a museum of objects of intensely human interest; but when we bear in mind the complexity of her racial problems, the very high percentage of illiteracy, and the fact that fifty well-defined different languages are spoken within her borders, the difficulties in the way of developing a self-conscious national life are seen to be enormous.

A certain proportion of the population, limited both as regards numbers and the social orders from which it is recruited, can speak and write English tolerably well. Of members of these classes, the various Indian Nationalist parties consist. They have received a certain amount of training in English ideals and in the working of English legal institutions and methods of administration as applied to India. They tend to accept British political ideals as their model, and seek to work them out on the platform of India. While most of them have thus become Westernised more or less, they have often, owing partly to the character of their education, become divorced from their own genuine traditions, and thus have lost touch with the conditions of life and habits of thought of the classes below them.

Besides, almost every lawyer is a landholder to a greater or less extent, and thus they naturally tend to look on the lower classes simply as a source of income, from which the greatest possible amount is to be extracted by way of rent or fees. Any idea of human brotherhood towards them is said to be conspicuous by its absence. Thus the anomaly comes about that the class which in the name of the common nationality of all Indians desires to modify and eventually to put an end to the "British Raj" is really not genuinely Indian in character at all, but derives its inspiration from the political ideals of those whose rule it wishes to supplant.



There is nothing necessarily wrong with this desire itself. What is probably wrong is the method of procedure adopted. The greatest enemy of Indian nationality is not the "British Raj," but conditions as they exist in India itself. The qualities which conduce to the development of responsible citizenship ought to manifest themselves in matters of purely local interest and be developed in small matters and with small units before their existence with reference to India as a whole can be assumed. Too many mutual differences have to be sunk before the conception of the common bond of Indian nationality is reached, and even then it will hardly be such as to awaken a genuine enthusiasm in the breasts of the great mass of the Indian population. The average Indian rarely looks beyond his own personal and family interests, or those of his caste-fellows or co-religionists. What is needed is not a wider territorial, but a wider spiritual outlook. The latter might even take the form of an apparent neglect of the common interests of India, and a concentration of attention, on the part of influential and enlightened Indians, on social and economic problems as they affect the localities with which they are personally connected. An organism cannot be healthy unless the cells of which it is composed are healthy. When some of the worst of the social diseases from which India suffers, such as child-marriage, the victimising of widows, and the ill-treatment of the depressed classes, to mention only a few, have been cured, the establishment of a healthy condition of society will provide a foundation, and the only hopeful foundation, for political reconstruction of a far-reaching character. Even under the present *régime*, and without any material change of law, all these social evils might be eradicated; *but they must be eradicated by the Indians themselves*. The Government does not venture to interfere directly, for fear of offending religious prejudice. The lesson of the Indian Mutiny has not been lost in that respect, but has tended to drive the Government into the other extreme of unnecessary and excessive caution in dealing with social and religious matters. Reforms of this character must spring spontaneously from the people, and the most that the Government can be expected to do is to remove all possible obstacles from their path. Later on I may indicate a number of other factors at present at work whose growth and development would similarly tend to the social uplifting of India.

Although most of the higher functions of government and administration are in the hands of Europeans, the *personnel* of the various services, from top to bottom of the hierarchy, is over 90 per cent. Indian. In addition, Indians compose the great majority of the representatives on Municipal Councils, District Boards, and in the Provincial Legislative

Councils. Only in the Viceroy's Council is there an official majority. Though their power is limited to some extent owing to the possibility of an official veto of their acts, one may form an opinion of the spirit in which they exercise the influence and patronage at their disposal. Single-minded Indians whose sole concern has been the public good have frequently adorned the council board of such bodies. Among others, the late Mr. G. K. Gokhale deserves to be specially mentioned in this connection.

Nevertheless, for historical and other reasons it is unfortunately true that, so far as Indian agency is concerned, the determination to exercise power in the interests solely of that vague but very important entity, the general public, is not so common as one would like to see it. India has seen the growth and decay of splendid empires and monarchies, but not one of these was able to establish the fabric of its power on a permanent basis, and not one survived the period of progressive deterioration in the character of its rulers which inevitably ensued. No limit was set to the personal caprice of the monarch, and the idea of constitutional power and the responsibilities which it involves never emerged into the light of day. The principle that the primary function of government is to seek the good of the governed was scarcely ever recognised. Their lives and property were protected by no Magna Charta. An inert, apathetic mass, they lay at the feet of the tyrant, and never developed enough political consciousness or internal cohesion to force from their rulers the recognition of the rights of the subject as a normal feature of government. The sovereign and his subordinates in their various degrees almost invariably acted as if the *raison d'être* of authority was to enable its possessor to secure his own gratification and enrichment.

So far as British India is concerned, the higher branches of administration, judicial, financial, and executive, are absolutely free from the taint of corruption; they are filled almost entirely by members of the Indian Civil Service. Whether the system be called "bureaucracy" or "official autocracy," the fact remains that under this system clean and disinterested government exists in India to an extent that countries like England and America might well envy. This, however, is due to the fine traditions of the Service and to the personal character of its members. In the lower grades of the public service, in which Indian agency is the rule, the tendencies referred to have to be kept constantly in check, and in the native States, with a few noteworthy exceptions, the old traditions of Oriental despotism are still to be found. They are modified to some extent by the moral pressure exercised by the British Resident at the native court and by the desirability of doing nothing that might bring the State

into conflict with the paramount Power. The same suzerainty, however, diminishes the possibility of successful revolt, which formerly was the only remedy for unjust government. Consistent and continuous misgovernment may cause the Government of India to interfere and take temporary charge of the administration, but within these limits, neglect, oppression, and corruption may go very far. M. Joseph Chailley, a distinguished Frenchman who has studied problems of administration in India, refers on page 233 of his book, "Administrative Problems of British India," to a memorandum written in 1885, of Indian authorship, and dealing with the States of Mahratta origin. "I find it stated that the chief considers the State as his own, the people as his slaves, and the budget as his privy purse; that torture is a regular form of judicial procedure; that corruption softens the rigour of the judges; that any crime may be atoned for with money; that forgeries and false witness abound; and that taxes are three or four times heavier per head than in British India."

A conversation with an Indian barrister whose practice lay in a British cantonment right in the heart of a certain native State, though his description was probably intended to be impressive rather than accurate, enabled me to form some idea of present conditions. He told me that the ruler was a young man, personally well-intentioned, that he had over twenty wives and an equal number of children, and thus, owing to the pressure of his domestic duties, had little time to attend to affairs of State. Consequently, its administration was very corrupt, especially among its lower officials.

In British India lawyers flourish exceedingly, and cases have been known of their receiving Rs. 1,000 or Rs. 1,500 a day for pleading before a subordinate judge, who draws Rs. 800 or less per month. I now understood why my friend did not practise under the jurisdiction of the native State, but confined his activities to a small portion of territory under British rule. In this particular native State a lawyer must work for a very small fee. If he seeks to obtain remuneration more in accordance with his professional dignity, his client will probably refuse, on the ground that he has made a "bandobast" with the judge. In other words, he has "squared" that officer.

I was also told that rich men were often accused by the police of crimes they had never committed, and only escaped punishment by the payment of heavy blackmail. This state of affairs is not, however, confined to Indian native States; among the police and democratically elected police magistrates of certain States of the great American Commonwealth the idea seems to persist that one of the chief uses of legislative enactments is to enable those who are supposed to

enforce them to profit by omitting to do so—for a consideration.

I may add that in British India the system of paying the lawyer as much per hour as the judge per week is not always found to work well, and that cases have occurred in which it has been whispered that the money would have been better spent in paying an adequate salary to the presiding officer or maintaining the witnesses. Such influences need not always take the vulgar form of cash payments. In India large families are the rule, and almost every Indian officer has at least one son whose failure to pass the necessary examinations excludes him from the professions, and for whom he is glad to get any employment, however humble. Or the said son may have qualified as a lawyer, but find himself briefless. In such circumstances, a little tact and sympathy, without breaking any positive law, often go a long way to smooth matters, thus affording a pleasing illustration of the value of the great principle of mutual help.

Where clean government exists in British India it is in European hands or under direct European supervision. Its subordinate officials are mostly Indian, and, generally speaking, they fulfil their functions with honesty and efficiency. It is to be feared, however, that if the guidance and control exercised by men of European ideals and education were removed, the old Indian tendencies in matters of government would assert themselves. What is lacking is not necessarily rectitude of intention, but unbiassed judgment and energy of will. The moral individuality of the Indian is often not sufficiently developed to enable him without encouragement from those above him to resist the powerful social and religious influences, not to mention those of a more material character, that would assail his integrity. In addition, his ideas of fair play and of the comparative criminality of different offences are often very strange from a European standpoint. He is too often influenced by considerations of family, caste, or other personal relationships. Especially in the lower grades, the tendency to corruption is very prevalent.

The "patwari" is in many parts of the country the village bailiff who keeps the records of lands and crops, transfers of ownership, and other information useful to Government in the collection of land-revenue. He draws less than £1 per month, and that is supposed to be his sole means of support. A certain patwari was in danger of being suspended, or having his pay cut, for some misconduct or other; when the alternative was put to him, he immediately offered to surrender the whole of his pay, crying out that he could live well enough without his pay, but could not live without his job. This particular instance is taken from a little book

called "Things Seen in India," but could be paralleled from many other sources.

In 1902 a low-caste Hindu in Bombay was fined Rs. 8 by a high-caste magistrate for having "polluted" a village well by drawing water from it. The decision was reversed on reference to the High Court, but numerous similar cases doubtless occur which escape the notice of the higher authorities. When I mentioned this case to a certain District Magistrate, he immediately capped it by another, and an even more glaring, instance of this kind of thing. When he was a sub-divisional officer somewhere in Bengal he discovered quite accidentally that a well built by the Local Board at the public expense had been located right on the premises of a high-caste Hindu who had some influence with one of the members. He found that this well was really only being used for the private convenience of this man and his family. Besides being in the courtyard of a private house, there is a religious rule that, unless a well is big enough for a cow to turn round in, it is polluted if used by a person of low caste or a non-Hindu. Consequently, no Mahommedan or low-caste man dared to come near it; all that they were allowed to do was to pay their share of the taxation that had been spent on its construction. The sub-divisional officer at once collected all the Mahommedans and low-caste men he could find and marched them up to the well, from which, under his personal supervision, they threatened to draw water. He thus compelled the recipient of public bounty to disgorge a large proportion of the money which had been spent on making a well, which, as a matter of fact, he could quite easily have afforded to excavate at his own personal expense.

In fairness to the Indians, it ought to be mentioned that this inclination to use the control of public money for private advantage has been yielded to by Europeans who ought to have known better. Cases have occurred in Assam where tea planters have used their membership of a Public Board to have roads made right up to and through their tea gardens at the public expense, except for a small connecting portion inside the latter, which they constructed themselves. Though very convenient for the owners of the tea estates, these roads were practically useless to the general public, who might not pass over the private portion of such a road without permission, and consequently the former enjoyed the benefits of both systems.

For historical reasons, as already indicated, the political community or "State" failed to come into existence in India. In the absence of this it was impossible for the qualities of citizenship, which are only its reflex in the individual, to develop.

Whatever the form of the society in which a man lives, its effect on him will be in accordance with its own essential nature.

In a civic community it is expected that the citizen will consider that the interests of the State have a paramount claim on himself and all that he possesses, including life itself, unless he happens to be a "conscientious objector." In a caste community caste feeling is uppermost. A State might retain, as between different classes of its citizens, a measure of caste feeling without altogether losing its essential nature, but there is no room within the narrow bounds of caste for the development of the qualities characteristic of the former. Where wider forms of political organisation have existed in India they have always taken the form of autocracy. Political loyalty in India had invariably a personal object. It was the spontaneous manifestation of gratitude to a munificent sovereign or to a governor whose rule was just. It was called forth by the personal character of the man, and not by any conception, however vague, of a political order which claimed devotion. Such a loyalty was inspired by Akbar's rule, and such was the feeling which the personal magnetism of men like Henry Lawrence and John Nicholson aroused in the breasts of Indians with whom they had to do. It is difficult to measure the intensity in which this feeling may exist on occasion. It is written large on many a pathetic tale of the Indian Mutiny, and evidences of it constantly recur.

From the point of view of the Indian peasant the British "Raj" is incarnate in the magistrate-collector or chief executive officer of his district. The peasant knows nothing about High Court rulings, judicial precedents, or theories of representative government, but if the general rule of that officer is just and taxation is not excessive he is satisfied. He understands government by a man, but might not appreciate the divine right of  $(x+1)-x$  to rule. In any changes that take place in the system of governing India, this quality of the Indian mind ought to be kept carefully in view.

I have dwelt at considerable length on the comparatively undeveloped condition of the sense of citizenship in India because the matter is of considerable importance in itself and constitutes one of the chief points of contrast with the West. It does not follow that the conceptions of citizenship existing in countries like England and America are entirely satisfactory. The important point is that where one might get hundreds of young Englishmen or Americans to fill a position of trust and responsibility with efficiency and a sense of public duty, it would be difficult in the case of Indians to

obtain dozens on whom one could rely with the same confidence. It is all a question of social atmosphere, mental outlook, educational training, and their resulting influence on conduct.

Under the present *régime* there is nothing to prevent the development of a healthy spirit of citizenship. It might manifest itself in the popular institutions already existing, and prove its earnestness in the field of social service by the wholesale abolition of those social abuses which hang like a millstone round the neck of India. Improvements effected by bands of zealous workers in different localities will be more than a local importance. Their effects will be greater or less degree throughout the length and breadth of India. By raising the whole tone of public life they will have political consequences of the utmost value. Nature admits of no hard and fast distinction between the social and the political spheres. The political community is only a particular kind of social organisation. The welfare of society depends on the moral health of the individual. Neither can political health co-exist with social disease. In the absence of a healthy social order, to attempt ambitious political reforms would be like building a house on the sand. When social conditions are favourable, political ideals will become both valuable and fruitful, but while particularism is the note of the average Indian in his social relations, it would be dangerous to concede too much to the imaginary bond of a common Indian nationality.

### **Spiritual Contrast between India and the West.**

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This discussion had its origin in an attempt to explain the standing miracle of our rule in India; incidentally, we have referred to certain clearly marked distinctions in the mental outlook of India and the West from the social and political point of view, and have attempted to account for them by considerations partly historical, partly sociological. I also remarked upon the absolute distinction that exists, both locally and otherwise, between the European and the native cities in Bombay. This holds good of every Indian town or city where Europeans live. The "station," with its long, low, tiled, or flat-roofed "bungalows," standing in spacious compounds or fields, is really a separate and distinct entity from the neighbouring Indian city. The fact is that East and West seem to amalgamate neither locally nor spiritually. In ancient times India was very much troubled by incursions of tribes from Central Asia, who came and slew and plundered and then departed. The "Pax Britannica" is now maintained by an Anglo-Indian community which is

equally migratory in its habits. It has not settled down and made India its home. It is really a portion of England transplanted to Indian soil, and though influenced to some extent by climate and surroundings, its customs and social institutions are still essentially English. Perhaps it is because, unlike all their predecessors, the wielders of the present Empire never themselves took root in the soil that they are able to administer justice with such impartiality. The total absence of local ties might contribute to that result, but even-handed justice might accompany a lofty indifference even contempt for, the parties primarily concerned.

It is that in India the British official is instinctively on the side of the oppressed, whereas in the social circumstances of his own country his practical sympathy might go out to the classes that do most of the oppressing. I take this opportunity, however, of removing a very prevalent misconception, namely, that European officials in India are without exception crusted "Tories" and the enemies of all progress and reform, both in India and at home. With regard to home politics, I have met many who sympathised with the practical programme of the parties which call themselves "progressive," but I have met none who had not an absolute and well-merited contempt for professional politicians as a class, especially those of the lawyer variety.

This is by way of a digression. I have tried to show how true it is that "East is East and West is West" in the social and political sphere, and how, even within the bounds of an Oriental country, East and West fail to amalgamate. It remains to illustrate it in the spiritual outlook of India as opposed to that of the West. This will involve a reference to religious matters; so far as India is concerned, we are not particularly interested in the different varieties of superstition and belief in which the religious life of her many peoples finds expression. Of course, the main division is into Hindus and Mahommedans; the former number about two hundred millions and the latter about sixty millions. Islam offers fewer points of contrast with the religion of the West than are found in Hinduism; in fact, it stands in the same position relative to Judaism as Christianity does, except that it has kept much closer to it. While it is true that the religious life of Mahommedans in India has been modified by contact with Hinduism (witness the shrines here and there that are patronised by members of both religions), Hinduism must nevertheless be regarded as the characteristic religion of India.

Hindus are born, not made; orthodox Hinduism does not claim to be a Catholic religion; it is in theory content with the numbers it already possesses. It imposes no standard of conduct or belief. A man may be flagrantly immoral in



character and absolutely atheistical in belief, but so long as he obeys the rules of caste and outwardly conforms to religious observances he may still remain within its pale. Hinduism has two main aspects, a popular and a philosophical. Its original basis was ancestor-worship, a form of religion which is characteristic of patriarchal societies, and is at present the most fundamental religion of the Chinese and the Japanese. It is still an important element in Hinduism, but has been overlaid by additions from many other sources. The powers of nature were worshipped under various names by the ancient Aryans. Subsequently the human heroes of the old Indian epics have been added as gods to the Hindu pantheon. Whole tribes of aborigines have entered its caste system, bringing with them their own religious practices. The demon-worship, nature-worship, and animistic beliefs of the latter have contributed their share to the different cults which find favour in one or other part of India and among different sections of the populace. Now and then great religious thinkers and teachers have risen above the prevailing superstitions of the popular religion; such were Gautama and Sankara in ancient, and Dayananda, the founder of the Arya Samaj, in modern times. In their lives and teaching they gave expression to the highest religious aspirations of their generation, and left their mark on the religious thought of after ages. They also enable us, ignoring altogether the various cults of the popular religion, to arrive at a few characteristic religious ideas, or ways of thinking in religious matters, which are constantly recurring, and which are invaluable to us for purposes of comparison with the West.

From the Western point of view man is the centre of the Universe; he is lord of creation, and everything in it is assumed to exist primarily for his comfort and convenience. The conception of the existence of a single underlying reality, called God, is one which has been reached comparatively late in the history of European countries, when it had already been a commonplace of Indian thought for centuries. Monotheism is clearly traceable in the Vedas, and was developed into an elaborate system of philosophy many centuries before the dawn of the Christian era. But the Indian mind is at variance with the Western, not only in its conception of God, but in its attitude to the kindred problems of the relation of God to man and of man to the rest of creation. With regard to the first the tendency is Pantheistic. The impersonal, all-pervading Brahma is the sole reality, the world as a whole is a material manifestation of him, but if any man thinks that the world, as thus constituted, is real, he is the victim of an illusion. The soul of man is an emanation from this same Reality. It has no independent existence

and no final resting-place except in the source from which it has arisen. The starting point of Indian thought is Brahma. The idea of God seems to arise spontaneously in the Indian mind and to be the root assumption of their most typical philosophies. On the other hand, the Western mind looks at God through human spectacles. We assume our own existence as a matter of course, and the tendency is to regard the existence of God as something which must be proved. The attempts have usually been not very convincing, for obvious reasons. From a truly philosophical point of view it is impossible, as it is unnecessary, to prove the existence of God. Euclid did not feel called upon to prove the existence of space before he proceeded to demonstrate the properties and relations of figures occupying space. The conception of God occupies an analogous position from the point of view of India's greatest philosophers.

So profoundly convinced was the Indian mind of the existence of God that human life and human personality tended to be submerged in the all-embracing ocean of his Reality. Hence the failure of such commonplace Western notions as that of the supreme value of human life to emerge. In addition there are geographical reasons which helped to prevent the growth of such ideas. India is a country in which the periodical destruction of myriads of human beings by famine, flood, and pestilence, not to mention wild animals and snakes, teaches men that, so far from being a little lower than the angels in their relation to the mighty forces of nature, they are not much higher than the brute creation. Consequently, it is not a congenial soil for the development of such self-conceited notions as that we are the lords of creation, and that everything in it was made for our special benefit. To the Indian mind all life whatsoever is more or less sacred. In the case of the Jains, who separated themselves from orthodox Hinduism about two thousand five hundred years ago, this principle is carried so far that they will not kill anything, even the most venomous snakes. In Ahmedabad, where many Jains live, a snake which is found in the neighbourhood of the city is carefully brought to the comparative safety of the open country and there allowed to escape. Certain of the Hindu gods are conceived as manifesting themselves in the flesh in the form of animals; an idea such as this would not commend itself to the Western mind. Moreover, according to the doctrine of transmigration, the soul of a human being after death might enter into an animal. The prevalence of this belief was at once a consequence of the comparatively equal estimation in which life, human and non-human, was held, and helped in its turn to perpetuate it. The endowment of vegetarianism with a

religious sanction, in the case of the majority of Hindus, was partly due to the same cause.

In their conception of the relation of man to the one impersonal reality Brahma, various attempts were made to preserve for the human soul some remnants of an independent existence, including the possibility of its possessing a personality of its own. The one reality was called the container, the human soul the contained, and the relation between them was defined as that between a material object and the actual space which it occupies. The material object is penetrated at every point by the universal medium in which it exists, and yet it may be said to be a separate and distinct entity. Thus it is with the soul. A very small advance from the position would involve one in Pantheism; at any rate, its practical outcome was that the idea of the soul's dependence on Brahma was emphasised until that of its separate existence was almost extinguished. In the West the tendency was to cling to the idea of the soul's individual existence at all costs, and if anything to exaggerate it. From the point of view of ethics the results were most valuable. If the soul of man is either nothing or a mere automaton, there can be no such thing as morality. To the Western mind, and rightly so, man is not altogether the victim of circumstances or the creature of environment. He is bound by the laws of nature in his physical aspect, and to some extent by the laws of heredity and environment, but within these limitations he does consciously possess a certain freedom of choice. He is not altogether a pawn on the board of destiny, but may take a certain intelligent interest in the game, and can even occasionally make some of the moves. On such foundations the whole fabric of Western morality has been built. However valuable the growth of this morality, resting as it does on the sense of human freedom and of human dignity, we must not overlook the fact that the morality which has thus developed is to the ordinary man largely devoid of either a philosophical or a religious basis. This is only another manifestation of a very common phenomenon of Western life, the absence of relation between religion and life.

The doctrine of the Immanence of the Spirit is a fundamental one of Christian theology, but it plays a small part in the religious life of the average Christian. If it means anything, it must mean the constant and growing self-revelation of the Divine Spirit in the human soul. The very prevalent idea that Revelation only lasted a few centuries, and ceased when the Canonical writings had reached their final form, has contributed in large measure to this result. After all, the chief value of these writings is that they are mostly a record of human experience in close touch with the Divine.

To attach too much importance to their literal accuracy is liable to result in a substitution of the Written Word for the infinitely more valuable thing of which it can, in the nature of the case, only give a very inadequate representation. A Revelation of the Divine Nature had to exist in the consciousness of human beings before it found its way into the Sacred Writings, and it is quite unjustifiable to assume that Revelation in this sense ceased when the last book of the Bible was written. If its writers merely wrote to dictation what they did not understand or realise in their own lives, their work would be of very little value, and its literal accuracy would be dearly purchased by the sacrifice of everything which gave it a human interest.

However that may be, it is almost heresy to suggest that there is a continuous and growing revelation of God in nature, in science, and, above all, in human life, with its divine discontent and ceaseless striving after better things, while the doctrine of the Immanence of the Spirit has sunk into a meaningless form.

A Christian missionary, who was also a profound student of Indian lore, told me that Christianity has much to gain, or rather to regain, by being transplanted to the soil of India. He mentioned the very doctrine under discussion, and said that whereas it did not mean half enough to the Western Christian, it was profoundly realised by Indian converts, since it was in complete harmony with their own religious ideas.

I have since had placed in my hands a published lecture by the same eminent authority on the "Hindu Scheme of Salvation," and I was glad to discover that I had arrived independently at substantially the same conclusions with regard to what he calls those "underlying beliefs and doctrines which, though less in evidence, do, as a matter of fact, determine and dominate popular Hinduism."

\* We have already dealt by way of anticipation with the metaphysical basis of Hinduism. We must now deal briefly with three other characteristic beliefs—the twin doctrines of *Transmigration* and *Karma*, and the doctrine of *Release from Re-birth*. In the Hindu view the soul is a solitary wanderer from the Eternal to the Eternal. The logical outcome of birth is death, and of death re-birth. During its pilgrimage the soul may inhabit now a man, now a plant, now a stock or stone, or may reverse the order; it may descend from god to devil or ascend from devil to god, but all the time it is bound in the endless chain of phenomenal existence, and must come to birth and death repeatedly. The number of births that each soul must experience is calculated at 8,400,000!

However, the law of transmigration does not work capriciously. It is explained, and in the Hindu view justified, by the complementary doctrine of Karma. Karma means Action, and the doctrine that goes by that name expresses the belief that every action, whether good or bad, affects the condition and determines the fortune of the soul both here and hereafter. If a man suffers any of the ills to which flesh is heir he must have done something to justify it in a previous existence. Every misfortune is in this view a punishment. To quote from "The Hindu Scheme of Salvation": "To the wife newly widowed comes the agonising thought that, had she not sinned in a previous existence, her husband had not died. Nay, further, the calamity of being born a woman is itself a punishment of sin."

As a theoretical explanation of the eternal problem of suffering this doctrine might be quite harmless. But it has had certain practical consequences of a most unwholesome character. It has probably helped to create a certain hopeless and fatalistic tendency in individuals born in the humbler classes of society. The idea that one's present misfortunes are the inevitable result of conduct in a past life tends to bring about the feeling that they must be endured to the end, and that it is neither possible nor right to endeavour to escape from them. Similarly, in the case of the higher classes of society, it appears to justify an attitude of absolute indifference to the sufferings of the lower orders. Why should a man extend a helping or sympathetic hand to the wretched when by doing so he seems to be flying in the face of the immutable laws of destiny, and even if successful may only be storing up more trouble in a future life for the person he seeks to benefit? It has thus helped to cast a kind of religious sanction over some of the worst features of Indian society.

There is further implied in the doctrine of Karma that all action of any kind, quite apart from its moral value, perpetuates the necessity for re-birth. Complete salvation is thus not to be achieved by consistently good action, even if continued in a number of successive lives. Such action would, of course, meet with appropriate reward in increasing happiness on the phenomenal level of existence. But the chain of destiny would still remain unbroken.

The Hindu thus asks, not "What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" but "How shall I escape from this painful necessity of living for ever?" The answer given by different schools of thought and practice was invariably the same. The soul must somehow escape altogether from the laws of Karma, and to do this it must give up all *action* of every kind whatever. Two main methods of achieving this result commended themselves very widely, the practice of

asceticism and the acquisition of knowledge. Men turned aside in thousands from all the concerns of life and became homeless wanderers, supporting themselves on the alms given by the piety and charity of their fellow-men. To give alms to such was to acquire religious merit, and, of course, impostors in large numbers have learnt to mumble a few prayers in Sanskrit and profit by this amiable weakness of their countrymen. Behind all this, however, is a solid substratum of genuine religious asceticism. Indeed, without it the impostors would not find the profession a profitable one. In 1901 there were 5,200,000 religious beggars of one kind or other in India. At a low estimate they cost the people of India £12,500,000 per annum, a serious tax on the resources of the country.

- A mild asceticism was combined in the Buddhist system with the principle that salvation, i.e., escape from the necessity of re-birth, is to be achieved by knowledge and right living. Gautama, the founder of this religion, was born about 480 B.C. Buddhism attained a wide popularity in India, but by the eleventh century A.D. it was finally overcome or absorbed by Hinduism, and it now exists in a scarcely recognisable form only in China, Japan, the Himalayan States, Burmah, and Ceylon.

The characteristically Hindu system of the *Upanishads* had been developed by 500 B.C. As interpreted and expounded by Sarkaracharya, a great religious teacher of the ninth century A.D., it is of first-class importance for the study of Hinduism in its philosophic aspect.

- According to it, Liberation is to be obtained by following the *Path of Wisdom*. The latter will lead finally to the conviction that Brahma is the sole Reality, and as Brahma is "without parts comprehending in itself all Reality," the true existence of everything is Brahma. The liberated soul can thus say with thorough conviction, "I am Brahma," and when this stage has been reached its wanderings are over and it has attained eternal peace.

Sarkaracharya popularised the doctrine of *Maya*, or illusion, as the explanation of the seeming plurality in the word which makes it so difficult for ordinary individuals to realise the essential oneness of Reality. To understand that all phenomenal existence is an illusion is to have taken a long step on the path that leads to final release. This highly philosophical religion, however, made too great demands on the intellectual capacity of the average man. While its fundamental position commends itself readily even to the unlettered Hindu, to follow its precepts in detail was impossible for all but a select few. It had, however, a popular aspect, in which the Brahma, on whom, the sages meditated, was considered to have become incarnate in

the god Krishna, who might be represented in the form of an idol and approached with prayer and sacrifice by even the humblest and most ignorant. This doctrine of incarnation is a commonplace of Hindu religious thought, and is specially prominent in the various popular religions.

The final object of all Hindu religion is the union of the soul with God. The corresponding doctrine of the indwelling of the Spirit is an aspect of Christian truth which is very much realised by Indian converts. In that way this doctrine has, since Christianity took root on Indian soil, obtained, as it were, a new lease of life. Another thought inherent in Christianity, namely, the transience of all things earthly, has among Indian converts an importance it no longer possesses in the West. We have a few hymns like "A few more years shall roll," but in India the recent hymnology composed in the vernacular gives marked prominence to this idea.

### Popular Hinduism.

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Thus far we have been concerned with Hinduism in its philosophical, and consequently more attractive, aspect. The picture would not be complete without some reference to the religious life and practice of the majority of Hindus.

Historically, Hinduism early developed the caste system, with the Brahmans or priestly caste at its head. No completely satisfactory explanation of the origin of caste in India has yet been reached, but it seems clear that the feeling on the part of the Aryan invaders of racial superiority to their darker predecessors, the tendency for a developing community to assign different functions to various groups among its members, and the principle by which in the East the different professions and occupations almost invariably became hereditary, all contributed something towards the creation of this strange social phenomenon. What began as a matter of social convenience was not long in obtaining a religious sanction. The four original castes were said to be divinely appointed—the *Brahmans* having come forth from the head of the god; the *Kshatriya*, or warrior caste, from his arms; the *Vaśya*, or agricultural and artisan caste, from his thighs; and the *Sudras*, or menial, non-Aryan caste, from his feet. As time went on castes became more and more stereotyped, and, at the same time, the original four orders became subdivided into innumerable sub-castes. In 1901, 2,378 principal castes and tribes, distributed among 43 races and nationalities, were counted. Among Brahmans alone, 1,800 subdivisions or Brahman sub-castes are said to exist. For convenience, the different sub-castes are grouped under the four heads given above, but it must be remembered that all

castes are mutually exclusive, even when subdivisions of the same original caste. To say that a certain Hindu is a Brahman is not a sufficient caste designation; the particular sub-caste of Brahmanism to which he belongs must be added. In general, however, a member of a Brahman caste is considered the social superior of a Kshatriya, and so on down the hierarchy of caste.

The Brahmans were originally the priestly caste, and their rule was a theocracy pure and simple. Under it religion became more and more ceremonial, sacrifice and ritual more and more complex. Hence the necessity for a skilled hereditary priesthood to interpret the will of the gods to men. They were looked on as semi-divine or, indeed, as divine altogether, and gifts flowed in on all sides to them. Sacrifice and ritual became mysterious operations which, if duly performed, would irresistibly compel the gods to grant the prayer of the supplicant. The Brahmans alone knew these charms; hence they were considered to be, in a sense, more powerful than the gods themselves.

From early times not every Brahman could be a priest, as the members of this caste became too numerous, but every priest was a Brahman. The existence of the system, however, and the ceremonial nature of worship, ensured their social supremacy; consequently they cannot escape a certain measure of responsibility for encouraging the tendency of society and religion to develop in these directions. I was dining with a Hindu friend who belonged to a Brahman caste, at any rate by birth, and I asked him was he not afraid of being outcasted for dining with me. He said, "My ancestors made these rules of caste for their own convenience, and I do not see why I should not make new rules for my convenience."

It is very difficult for a European to realise the iron grip in which a Hindu is held by the customs and traditions of the society in which he lives. Some of them cannot claim any very remote antiquity of origin; one quite large caste is only 150 years old, and new castes occasionally come into existence still. Yet before many generations have elapsed their laws and customs have become fixed and rigid. Such is the intense conservatism of the Indian mind that the mere fact that something or other, especially if it has the appearance of divine sanction, has been done by a man's grandfather or father is a sufficient reason why he and his descendants should do it to all eternity.

In Hinduism degrees of social and religious privilege are parallel. There is a regular hierarchy from the highest Brahman castes down to the lowest castes of Sudras, and those classes which are either outcaste or about which it is difficult to say whether they can properly be called Hindu



or not. The privileges and comforts of religion were confined to the three highest caste groups. It was a crime punishable with excommunication from caste for a member of one of these groups to sacrifice for Sudras or divulge the contents of the Vedas to them. Certain of the temples might not, and may still not, be visited by any of the Sudra castes. Some of these depressed classes are considered to be so unclean ceremonially that they are referred to as the "untouchable classes." If a member of such a class meets a Brahman, he must make a detour round him, and on no account must his shadow fall across the path of the latter. In Ahmedabad some time ago one class was considered so unclean that its members had to wear a brush tied to what would correspond to their coat-tails if they wore European clothing, so as to sweep up the ceremonial impurity left by them as they went along.

Occasionally reformers, *e.g.*, Gautama, the founder of Buddhism, arose who sought to include all classes within the pale of religion, but these attempts led to no permanent result. Occasionally, also, a direct attempt was made to break down the barriers of caste. A number of people cut themselves off from their caste relationship and tried to persuade others to do the same. The history of such attempts has an interesting parallel in a religious movement which took place some time ago in America. Some religious reformer sought to reunite all Christendom on the basis of what he considered the essentials of Christianity. The movement seemed to promise success for a time, but the final result was that a new sect, called "Christians" or "Disciples," was established. In the same way, the attempts to break down caste have resulted in the establishment of new castes. There are a number of movements at present in India which seek to bring about social and religious reform, including the abolition of caste. Amongst these are the Brahmo Samaj; the Prarthana Samaj, and the Arya Samaj. In another connection I may have more to say about them, but for the present it may be said that while at once influenced by, and a reaction against, Christianity, they are also, to a greater or less extent, a protest against the deadening effect of ceremonialism, an attempt to moralise practice and belief, and to make religion a salutary power both in the life of the individual and in the organisation of society.

Nearly everything in the daily life of a Hindu is a religious ceremony. He must eat according to the rules of caste; he must marry only such a wife as is chosen for him by his family, on the advice of the family priest in accordance with the rules of caste. He must bathe every morning in accordance with other caste regulations. He may not have his hair cut without the family priest being consulted and an

auspicious day chosen. The barber also must be a properly qualified man in accordance with the rules of religion. Washing his teeth is an act of religion, and is accompanied by certain prayers. If he crosses the "kala Pani" or "black water," i.e., leaves India by sea, he is liable on his return to be outcasted.

So long as these and other ceremonies are duly observed, it does not matter in the least what a Hindu actually believes or what kind of life he leads. That is why Hinduism is so striking an example of a purely ceremonial religion.

A visit to one or other of the holy places of Hinduism—Benares in the north or Madura in the south—would illustrate nearly every one of the points which have been mentioned. Benares has been a holy city for about 3,000 years; consequently it is a kind of centre and focus of Hinduism. The visitor takes his way by narrow lanes and devious paths to the Golden Temple. His nose is offended by many smells; he is jostled by impudent cows, which seem to know that they are sacred animals; he sees the loathsome forms of all kinds of deformity and disease. He understands, or soon gets to understand, that temples are infested by beggars of all kinds, because, by giving alms to such, merit is acquired by the devout. He is soon taken charge of by a temple menial, who brings him round and allows him to peep through chinks and crannies at the temple altar within. Here he sees incense burning, candles alight, and offerings of food and flowers laid out. If he attempts to go inside such a temple there will be trouble. His presence within the sacred precincts would be a pollution. It is better not to try. When he finally takes leave of his cicerone he will be given to understand that a "douceur" of two or three rupees is expected; he himself will probably have thought that the value of the services rendered could have been measured in as many annas. A compromise will be arrived at, and he will depart, reflecting sadly on the ways of temple menials, especially those of famous temples.

As he turns back for a final look at the Golden Temple at Benares, he may notice a number of tall minarets or towers rising above the surrounding houses. On inquiring, he will find that these belong to a mosque built by Aurangzeb right on the courtyard of the Golden Temple. This was one of the ways in which that fanatical monarch showed his contempt for Hindus and their religion. However, one cannot help feeling that the existence of this mosque is an accident, and just as it fails to modify the essential character of Benares as a Hindu city, so Aurangzeb and his like failed to crush the spirit of Hinduism in India.

Before sunrise on the following day let our visitor take a boat and drift slowly down the river. As he passes the

numerous temples and bathing ghats, the slanting rays of the morning sun will reveal a wonderful sight to his eyes. Thousands of Hindu pilgrims of both sexes and of all ages and conditions of life come down to bathe in the holy waters of the Ganges. Some of these people have come from afar; perhaps their homes are hundreds, or even thousands, of miles away. Happy the Hindu who has made a pilgrimage to the holy city and has washed away his sins in the sacred waters that flow beside it. Happier still the Hindu who has died within its precincts, and whose ashes have mingled with the same sin-cleansing river. There is no splashing or tumbling about on the part of the numerous bathers. The bathing takes place in accordance with a fixed religious formula and with due regard to decorum on the part of both sexes. Behold that aged pilgrim. At a certain stage in the process of bathing he takes up water in his two hands and lets it flow through his fingers. At the same time he mutters a prayer, addressed to the "Ganga" or Ganges of his devotions and ablutions. The prayer is probably in Sanskrit, according to a formula fixed, perhaps, three thousand years ago, and the chances are he does not understand a word of it.

If the visitor lifts his eyes for a moment from the bathers he may see on the bank a number of "sadhus," or holy men, whose bodies are covered with ashes, and with very little besides. They will sit quietly in their booths engaged in *their meditations or devotions, and although they may not actively solicit alms, their begging bowls are ready to receive them.* These are the people who profit by the religious instincts of their fellow-men, and who are always most numerous at places of pilgrimage. On his way back to his hotel the visitor will probably meet one or more funerals. If the dead body is that of a rich man the funeral is well worth seeing. The bier will be covered perhaps with rich yellow flowers and carried aloft on the shoulders of relations or friends of the same caste; there will probably be a brass band, and the "music" will remind one of merry-go-rounds or a Continental carnival. The procession will alternately move forward at a quick pace and stop for a time, while the music goes on unceasingly. On its arrival at the burning ghat beside the river, the bier will be stripped of its gay adornment of flowers, and the body, wrapped in a cloth, will receive its final washing in the holy river. It will then be set out to dry in the sun, and a pyre of wood will be built. Body and bier will be placed thereon, and a final layer of logs laid on top. The next-of-kin will duly set fire to it with a wisp of burning hay, and when the proceedings are over the party will bathe in the Ganges and come away, those who are nearly related having to perform various ceremonies, which in the case of certain castes will not be finished for a

month. When the flames have died down, the charred remains of the human body are picked out of the ashes and thrown without much ceremony into the river. When the dead body is that of a poor person, the wood is not always very plentiful, and after it has burned up a little it may die down and reveal a gruesome sight. Ancestor worship, as already mentioned, is the foundation of Hinduism, as it is of much of the religious life of the Chinese and Japanese. It involves, in the event of the death of the head of the house, a number of ceremonies and feastings, usually very expensive. The spirit of the departed is appeased with a ball of cooked rice every day for the first eleven days, and after that periodically. Three generations of relatives on both sides of the house take part in these ceremonies, and in the feast with which they are concluded. The expense is often a serious item in the economy of Hindu households, but with the economic aspect I shall deal in another connection. The ceremonies that have to do with the cremation of the dead are not considered by modern Hindus as a part of ancestor worship, and, unlike the latter, are inauspicious.

A visit to Madura in Southern India will accentuate the impressions already formed, and perhaps add some new ones. The temple consists of an inner sanctuary and a series of magnificent gateways or "gopurams" leading from courtyard to courtyard until the inner courtyard is reached. *The buildings are a splendid example of Dravidian architecture of about the 12th century A.D.*

If the visitor casts his eye aloft he may consider the temple buildings as typical of some of the sublimest conceptions of Hinduism; if, however, he fixes his gaze on the sights round about him, he will see many indications of its baser and more revolting aspects. He will be shown a little tank of filthy water, and will be told that the Hindu who immerses himself in it will be cleansed from the foulest sin. He may see emblems of nature-worship whose true meaning is usually not explained if there are ladies present, and from that he will realise that Hinduism has included in its all-embracing sweep this form of primitive religious instinct as well as many others. If he asks why the belly of this image is smeared with butter and saffron powder, he will be told that when small-pox breaks out in a family some of its members plaster it with butter in the course of their prayers for its assistance, and when the sick have been restored to health show their gratitude by covering the same portion of its anatomy with saffron powder. The European stranger will probably conclude his visit to this portion of the temple without further questions, and register a vow of thankfulness that he took the precaution to get vaccinated before going East.

In another portion of the temple precincts he may see a learned man, or "pandit," reading aloud to a constantly varying audience a portion of the sacred literature of Hinduism, probably in Sanskrit. These men are to be found at all famous centres of Hindu worship. They impart their knowledge to a devoted band of pupils for nothing, for, according to correct Hindu ideas, knowledge, especially sacred knowledge, is so absolutely priceless that it must not be sold for money. They live on the freewill offerings of their pupils and others; in this way the tradition of Sanskrit learning and literature has been kept alive from remote ages down to the present time, but their system of teaching and ideas of scholarship do not always commend themselves to European notions.

### Education.

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This leads us to the general subject of education as it exists in modern India. A brief historical retrospect is necessary. Exactly a hundred years ago the question as to whether or not it was advisable to educate the subject population of India was faced and answered in the affirmative on the most creditable of grounds—"that it would be a betrayal of national morality to perpetuate ignorance for the sake of sordid political considerations." Two further questions remained to be met. Should the knowledge imparted be Oriental in character, or should Western subjects of education be given a position of paramount importance? At first the few colleges then in existence taught Oriental knowledge and little else, but in 1835 Lord Macaulay, as President of the Council of Education in Bengal, secured the triumph of Western ideas of education once and for all. With a narrowness of mind which does him little credit, he denounced the "absurd science, absurd metaphysics, absurd physics, and absurd theology" of the former system. It was further decided that the medium of education should be English. As a necessary corollary of these decisions, it followed that pupils must be sought, not from the general mass of the Indian population, but from a few special classes. Only certain of the higher castes, like the Brahmans and Kayisths, who are supple-witted by nature, and have behind them centuries of hereditary intellectual activity, could adapt themselves to the exigencies of this form of education. The great bulk of the population remained sunk in their former ignorance. In 1854 it was found that education had progressed unexpectedly slowly, and was practically confined to the upper classes. In other words, secondary education was under way, but primary education was scarcely yet in being. At this time vigorous efforts were made to establish a system

of primary education which should reach the masses of the people. The results were still disappointing, and in 1882 a Commission was appointed to take stock of the whole position. While agreeing that the spread of primary education was of paramount importance, the practical results of its recommendations were mainly in the direction of an improvement of the systems of secondary and higher education already existing. It was thus found impossible to make primary education keep pace with the development of education in its higher branches. The difficulties to be overcome were and are enormous. There is no lack of pupils for high schools and colleges, since they are indispensable conditions for admission to Government service or the Bar, the two chief objects of ambition for Indians of a certain class. But the Indian "rayat" or peasant did not see what advantage an ability to do arithmetic or write the vernacular could confer on his son. The primary school promised no definite career and no rise in social position to its pupils. The argument that it made, or might make, more intelligent men, and so better citizens, was not likely to appeal to him.

Nor, on the other hand, was he altogether to blame for this attitude of mind. The curricula laid down were too ambitious, conformed too much to theoretical standards, and took no account of the practical conditions of life. What the pupil learnt or rhymed off at school came into no vital connection with his pursuits and interests, then and afterwards, and was soon forgotten. In addition, the quality of the teaching left much to be desired. The pay, which varied from about 10s. to £1 per month, did not attract men of the best calibre to the profession. The teachers were only half educated themselves, and the most that they could secure from their pupils was a parrot-like repetition of lessons they probably did not understand. Under these circumstances, what is needed, almost as much as a programme better adapted to the needs of the Indian peasant, is a substantial improvement in the quality of the teaching staff.

From a Western, and indeed from any point of view, the fact that fees are generally charged for primary education is an anomaly and a serious drawback. Though the fees are small and vary with the wealth of the parent, they are considered necessary by Government for financial reasons, and only about 5 per cent. of the pupils are educated free. They certainly act as a deterrent to the general spread of education. For these and other reasons it has been urged, especially by the section of Indian opinion with which the late Mr. Gokhale was prominently identified, that primary education should be made free and compulsory throughout the length and breadth of India. Unless a general raising of the standard of teaching accompanied it, the results would

probably not justify the greatly increased outlay it would involve. The adage, "It is not growing like a tree in bulk doth make man better be," applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to educational matters also. In existing circumstances to do both is said to be financially impossible, but the duty of improving education in its present extent is one which Government ought not, and, I think, does not, seek to avoid. Its general extension afterwards throughout India would come in good time.\*

In fairness it should be admitted that the difficulties to be overcome are colossal, and not all of them can be laid at the door of the Government. The people generally are not convinced of the value of primary education, and have no desire for improvement. Traditional prejudices and antipathies have to be overcome. A high-caste Hindu child would object to attending the same school as a child of the "untouchable" classes. There is constant friction between Hindus and Mahomedans in many parts of the country, and though the former would acquiesce in a purely secular form of education, the latter prefer denominational schools, and if some of their would-be leaders had their way the pupils would learn little else but religion there. The difficulties in the way of the spread of women's education are almost insuperable. Under the purdah system, which applies both to Hindus and Mahomedans, and is very general in northern and central India, a girl whose family has any social pretensions at all disappears at the age of about ten into the Zenana. A Hindu girl is usually married at that age, or not much older. Little girls of five, six, and seven years are often married and living in the husband's house under the guardianship of the mother-in-law. It is difficult to see when girls in this position can obtain any real education at all.

According to more recent information from a well-informed source, the making of primary education compulsory where geographically possible would involve no serious expenditure provided the burden were equitably distributed over all classes of the people. What has really stood in the way of all progress, at least in Bengal and Bihar, is the fact that, owing to the opposition of the land-owning classes, the local rates have been limited by law. The maximum amount of the Road and Public Works cess, which is the fund from which all local expenditure in the mofassil has to come, is

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\* For fuller and more authoritative information about the educational problems of modern India the reader is referred to the recently published report of the Calcutta University Commission. This appears to be a unique and altogether admirable document, and in spite of its "monumental" size is worthy of study by persons interested in educational matters at home as well as in India.—*February, 1920.*

one anna in the rupee of the rental. Municipal taxes are similarly limited, and consequently local bodies can just barely carry on the most necessary works. If this restriction were removed, and instead of the Road and Public Works cess a general rate for all local purposes were levied, which might go up to anything less than, say, four annas in the rupee, and if it were divided equally between the landlord and the tenant, it would be quite easy to have compulsory education, five or six times the number of dispensaries, better roads, and all sorts of improvements. On this view of the matter the Government made a tremendous mistake in opposing compulsory education as such, and should have adopted the attitude that the people might have it if they cared to pay for it, and proposed the abolition of the restrictions on local rates so as to leave the local bodies at liberty to do so. If this attitude had been adopted there would not have been another word on the subject, as the people who are howling most loudly in regard to such matters are those who are most reluctant to put their hands in their own pockets, and any District Board or Municipality before whom the proposal came up for increased rates for education would almost certainly have negatived it as a matter of course. If this policy had been followed, the Government would either have got rid of all agitation on the subject or it would have been directed against the wealthy classes, either of which results would have been highly satisfactory; but through excessive timidity and lack of imagination it has thrown away its best cards, and left room for any amount of misrepresentation in the House of Commons, the United States, and elsewhere.

Meanwhile, the matter rests there, and, so far as the latest statistics to which I have had access can be trusted, the present position is that 18 per cent. of the boys of school-going age are enjoying the benefits of primary education and about 3·5 per thousand of the girls.

• Secondary and collegiate education stand on a different footing. They came into existence much earlier, were developed almost independently of primary education, and draw their students from a very limited section of the population. The same difficulty as regards the quality of the teaching exists, but there is none about securing an adequate number of pupils or students. This is not due to any disinterested love of education, but to the fact that these institutions are the royal road to lucrative positions at the Bar or in Government service. If only those students attended our own universities and schools who are actuated solely by a desire for knowledge, I am afraid considerably fewer would be there. But whereas the Western student generally obtains a more or less real education, though not necessarily in the



class-room, the same cannot always be said of his Indian fellow.

The standard of teaching, both in the high schools and the colleges (the latter usually affiliated to one of the universities), is disappointingly low. In fact, we might say that the standard of the secondary schools is not above what are called upper primary schools in France, while collegiate or university education corresponds roughly to secondary education at home.

There are a number of causes to account for this. High schools are often under private management, though assisted, as a rule, by a grant from the Government, in return for which they must conform to the general educational regulations laid down by the latter. They are often run as a purely business concern, and the headmaster subsists largely on the fees paid by his pupils. It follows that if he shows a tendency to maintain a high standard and fail large numbers of his pupils at examinations, their parents will take them away and send them to some school whose headmaster is more accommodating or less conscientious. Consequently, the high schools turn out numbers of boys whose real education bears no relation to their qualifications on paper. In addition, the tendency to employ assistant teachers of defective quality at a totally inadequate salary is very prevalent. Numbers of these men only hold those positions for a few years until they can raise enough money to qualify for the Bar or obtain something better. They can have no heart in their work, and education must and does suffer in consequence. Faults of the same kind are repeated on a larger scale in the universities and their constituent colleges. There are five universities in India; those of Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras were founded in 1857, the university of the Punjab in 1882, and that of Allahabad in 1887. Bombay University has constituent colleges at Poona and Ahmedabad, as well as in Bombay itself, and the other universities similarly have affiliated colleges scattered over a wide area. Up till recently the universities were mere examining bodies, and the real unit of higher education was the college. The former could, however, influence the policy of the latter by its power to prescribe courses of study and to give or refuse affiliation, with its accompanying right to submit pupils for its examinations. Latterly Allahabad University has created special professorships of a strictly university character, and as the salary attached to these chairs is good, and really first-class men from home have been appointed, much may be hoped for from this reform.

Indian colleges are of a heterogeneous description. Some are Government colleges, but most are private institutions of a purely secular character unless they are mission colleges,

in which case they are supposed to possess, at any rate, a Christian atmosphere. The private colleges are usually assisted by a Government grant. An important source of income is the fees paid by the students. They vary from about £1 to £10 per annum. Generally speaking, the number of students who pass through Indian colleges is out of all proportion to the number of positions awaiting them when they have left. The colleges are usually understaffed, and a large proportion, and sometimes all, of the professors are Indian. The European professors are not always absolutely first-class men. The pay is not, as a rule, large enough to attract men of the highest educational attainments to India. As the general object is to inculcate the learning and ideals of Western civilisation, and this task is extremely difficult, the teaching ought to be in the hands of really good scholars who know both East and West, whether their nationality be European or Indian. This much may be said, however, that the quality of the teaching is at least as good as that of the taught. It would be a waste of money to bring out learned professors on a high-class salary from home in order to do schoolmastering work in the Indian colleges.

The colleges really suffer from the accumulated effects of the low standard of education in the institutions which feed them. The medium of education is English, of which the student is supposed to have a competent knowledge when he has left the high school. This is far from being universally the case, and lessons in the most varied subjects given in that medium tend to degenerate into lessons on the elements of English grammar.

Both universities and colleges are also the victims of their own financial circumstances. The fact that a large portion of their respective incomes is derived from fees of one kind or another operates in precisely the same way as in the case of the secondary schools. The matriculation standard is absurdly low. At present the same examination will qualify for a position as a railway guard or clerk, as well as for admission to university studies.

However valuable the other functions that it performs, and it is said to serve a most useful purpose in ensuring a certain minimum of ability as a qualification for the public and other services, a matriculation examination should provide some sort of guarantee that only those will enter a university who are able to benefit by the education obtainable there. The present system has turned adrift on India a class of half-educated students or graduates who are a source of much social and political discontent.

The mission colleges have contributed their share to the growth of this class. I have it on good authority that Sir Andrew Fraser, himself a supporter of missions, nearly lost

his life at the hands of two students of the Scottish Churches Mission College in Calcutta. Only a small proportion of the students attending mission colleges in India, as a rule, is Christian, and the number of conversions during college life is said to be small.

The part played by the text-book in Indian schools and colleges is out of all proportion to its value as a means of education. The memory of the Indian student is dangerously good, and the tendency is to rely on this hypertrophied faculty rather than to develop the powers of reasoning and independent thought. The student, who is left largely to his own resources when not in the class-room, works incredibly long hours, to the destruction of his eyes and very often to the permanent injury of his health. When he can repeat the text-book with the accuracy and with little more than the intelligence of a gramophone, he considers that he has mastered the subject. The "knowledge" thus acquired is duly registered in the examination, which is the only recognised test of scholarship. The number of students is usually so large that the professorial staff can have no personal knowledge of the intellectual progress of individuals in the ordinary course of study, and must rely altogether on what is, in the circumstances, a very artificial and unsatisfactory test.

From the point of view of discipline, the system, in both the secondary and collegiate grades, leaves much to be desired. With some notable exceptions, like the Mahommedan College at Aligarh, only a small number of pupils and students is accommodated in hostels, and is under the supervision of resident members of the teaching staff. "College life" is regarded as an invaluable feature of our Western universities, but its salutary discipline and mind-broadening influence have only a limited existence in Indian seminaries of learning. The majority of the students from a distance live in lodgings, or wherever they can, in the neighbourhood of the institution they attend, and are subject to all the temptations which are associated with city life in India as well as at home. For social and historical reasons, the sense of moral responsibility in the individual is relatively undeveloped in India. The result is deplored by social and educational reformers, and is often a matter of grave concern to the administration. Much of the political agitation in India is in the hands of the student class. In the West we are accustomed to laugh at the occasional ebullitions of political feeling in undergraduates, but though Indian students come to physical maturity much earlier and are often married, from the point of view of moral and intellectual development Western students are much better qualified to have political opinions.

With regard to education in India generally, I cannot help feeling that the impress which Macaulay has left on it has

been unfortunate in some of its tendencies and results. The idea, characteristic of his age and nation, seems to have been that the only nationality which was "worth while" was a British one, and that all that was necessary in order to turn a Brahman or a Kshatriya into a self-respecting English gentleman was an acquaintance with the English language and the science and letters of the West. Heredity, traditional culture, moral and religious outlook, counted for nothing, and if only the Indian could have been given a white skin in addition, the change might have been looked on as complete. The same spirit marked the early history of primary education in Ireland, and has left abiding traces even at the present day. There are Irishmen still living who in their school days were taught to sing the following edifying ditty:—

" I thank the goodness and the grace  
That on my birth have smiled,  
And made me in this Christian land  
A happy *English* child."

This perverse attempt on the part of early British administrators to anglicise India has left behind in nearly every case a legacy of problems which are almost impossible to solve.

In education the prevailing tendency is to sacrifice Oriental to Western studies. English is and must remain an important subject in any system of education we are likely to maintain in India, and an attempt to lessen its importance would be resisted by the Indians themselves, for the somewhat paradoxical reason that English is the "national" language of India. Yet from an educational point of view it is open to grave doubt whether, in their haste to acquire this very useful language, they do not sacrifice the advantage to be derived from a thorough knowledge of their own vernaculars and the classical languages on which they are based. As a foundation for further linguistic study, English is not satisfactory. Grammatically and philologically, it is essentially a dead language. When we require a new word in "English" we have to resurrect one from the living tomb of the classical languages. Whatever may be said for English from other points of view, there seems no reason why languages like French and German should play an important part on the curriculum of an Indian school or college. The comparative neglect of the classical languages of India—Sanskrit, Persian, and Arabic—is very regrettable. Sanskrit, in particular, is rich in phonetic values, and equally rich in literature. As a foundation for the scientific study of language it ought to hold the same position that Latin does among us. I doubt if an English boy can profitably be set to study French unless he is at the same time studying Latin. As a preliminary to the study of English, and concurrently with that of his own

vernacular, the Hindu boy ought to master, at any rate, the elements of Sanskrit grammar. There are treasures of literature of a philosophical and religious character hidden away in the Sanskrit language, and the Indian student has the best right to possess himself of these and make them, if possible, the common property of the world. A scientific and sympathetic study of his own classical antiquities would enable him to discover what is best in the legacy of his venerable civilisation. He would understand better the bearing of the past on the present, and his influence on existing social conditions would be more enlightened and better directed. As things are now, for an Indian student to go through an Indian college is to cut himself off very largely from his own past traditions, good and bad alike. He acquires a smattering of Western knowledge which enters into no vital connection with the ideas of his upbringing and with his social surroundings. He may learn enough to despise the ritual performances at the household shrine and at the temple, but, so far as his home life is concerned, the pressure of parents, grandparents, aunts, and uncles, all probably living under the same roof, is so strong that he will not openly rebel. His hereditary tendencies are Oriental, but his book-learning is of the West. He cannot truly be said to have acquired any real education at all.

In mathematical and scientific studies the case is somewhat different. It is difficult to teach these subjects of Western study except in a language which has grown with their growth and has a vocabulary to meet all their needs. This, in brief, is the case for the use of English as a *medium* of instruction in Indian colleges and schools. Western culture can only be imparted by the vehicle of a Western language. There is much to be said in favour of the use of English as a medium at an advanced stage of instruction; but from an early period in the high school, and after only a year or two's study of English, the pupil is, generally speaking, taught everything in that language. Those of us at home who, for our sins, were compelled to study German philosophy in German, have found the task not always easy, though our general education was sufficiently advanced. If from our early school days, after a year or two's acquaintance with German, we had to acquire all our knowledge of Science, Mathematics, History, Economics, and Philosophy through the medium of that language we might be able to form some idea of the difficulty which confronts the Indian student. Even so, the cases are not entirely analogous, because German has close affinities with English, whereas English is to the Indian what Urdu or Hindi would be to us. This is another of the causes of the superficial character of Indian education. The ideas he is expected to assimilate come to him in the garb

of a language which he only imperfectly understands. Is it any wonder that they do not become part and parcel of his intellectual furniture? The text-book knowledge thus acquired is not readily reinterpreted by the student into the thoughts and language of his own vernacular. Consequently, there does not take place that imperceptible permeation of ideas through all classes of society which is characteristic of the West. The education, such as it is, is the private possession of the educated classes, and does not react on the lower strata of society.

There is everything to be said in favour of retaining the vernacular as a medium of instruction until a really competent knowledge of English has been acquired. The elementary portions of the different branches of Western knowledge can be taught in the vernacular without suffering vital loss. More text-books of this kind should be used, and where not in existence should be written. In Bengal a number of middle "vernacular" schools exist which teach in the native language with satisfactory results. The writer had the opportunity of seeing the work done in an Arya Samaj school near Bombay. Elementary instruction in Science was there given in the vernacular, and its results were said to be excellent. The boys in that school are taught Sanskrit long before they begin to learn English. Their acquisition of English afterwards was all the more thorough and rapid on that account. After only one year's teaching they were able to read and speak English surprisingly well.

It is at first sight an anomalous feature of modern education in India that devotion to learning for learning's sake can scarcely be said to manifest itself at all. Yet this is strongly characteristic of the still existing traditions of Native Scholarship. The religious thought of India is exceedingly idealistic, but Indian students flock to the schools and colleges of our foundation for the most materialistic of reasons.

\* From that we might infer that the learning they there obtain has no attraction for them apart from the material rewards it brings; on the other hand, the Indian might rightly object that the constitution of these universities leaves no room for the development of such ideals of learning. To a student familiar with universities at home, those of India offer a surprising contrast. At home Studentships and Fellowships exist to which ambitious students may aspire, and in the tenure of which they are supposed to, and very often do, prosecute further studies out of the interest they have in learning itself. In that way standards of scholarship are set up and raised, and an atmosphere of learning is created. The student who has acquired a partial knowledge of a subject has constantly before his eyes a number of

specialists at his own university or elsewhere, with whose knowledge he may compare his own. In these circumstances he is less likely to develop "swelled head." The existence of a similar class in India highly educated in the learning of both East and West, though not necessarily all engaged in actual teaching, would help to produce the same salutary result among the educated classes, living as they do amidst a densely ignorant population, and liable to the intoxication that is the proverbial consequence of only a moderate indulgence in Pierian waters.

The suggestion that steps should be taken to create such a class emanates from Monsieur J. Chailley, the French observer I have referred to before. He advocates it on the ground that Indians are suited by nature and tradition to intellectual activities, and that the world of polite learning would gain considerably by the additions which such a class could make to our own knowledge of Asiatic civilisations, past and present.

He also urges that a greater number of men of really first-class attainments should be appointed from home to professorships in Indian universities, and salaries large enough to attract them given. Something in this direction has recently been done, and the idea meets with the approval of the Indians themselves. In the words of the late Mr. Gokhale, what India wants, in this connection, is "young men with the double gift of knowledge which they can communicate to us, and of sympathy which they can show us." As regards that portion of the teaching staff which is and must remain Indian, it would be advisable from time to time to send to Europe for a number of years' study at least a few picked Indians in their early manhood, who in this way might add to their Indian personality a first-hand knowledge of the ideals of Western civilisation, and interpret it to their classes on their return. Mr. Gokhale also expressed himself in favour of this proposal.

It must not be imagined that the staffs of these universities, whether European or Indian, are uniformly of second-class quality. I have come across many who are good enough for high academic positions in any university, though the Europeans among them complain that the work they have to do is very second-class indeed. The Principal of the Fergusson College, Poona, a private foundation affiliated to Bombay University and entirely staffed by Indians, is a Senior Wrangler of Cambridge and an ex-Fellow of St. John's College in that University. By his own choice he draws the munificent salary of £5 a month, and the rest of the staff is paid on a similar scale. Mr. Gokhale formerly taught in this College in the same self-sacrificing spirit. It is hopeful to see this typically Indian characteristic manifesting itself

in connection with the present system of higher education with its many shortcomings. In spite of all that has been said, its prospects are by no means gloomy if it can enlist this quality of the Indian character in its services to an even greater extent, and if it keeps before it the constant ideal of imparting an education in which the best elements of Oriental culture shall be modified, but not obliterated, by contact with the ideals and science of the West.\*

### **Administrative machinery of British India.**

Before dealing with some administrative problems of British India, a brief outline of the existing † system of government will not be out of place. The Secretary of State for India exercises ultimate administrative control and a general supervision over all the actions of the Government of India and its different Local Governments. Within India the highest authority is the "Governor-General in Council," in other words, the Viceroy, assisted by a small executive council which is composed of the heads of different branches of the administration. For legislative purposes this council is expanded considerably, and includes, among others, Indians who are elected by semi-popular constituencies. The majority of its members is, however, European.

Bombay, Madras, and Bengal have a Governor, appointed by the Crown, and assisted by a small executive council. Though, in general, subordinate to the Governor-General in Council, there are certain matters in which they can refer direct to the India Office. The smaller provinces, like the Punjab and the United Provinces, are ruled by a Lieutenant-Governor, who, being a member of the Indian Civil Service, and so familiar with the business of administration, does not require an Executive Council. Since Lord Morley's reforms these Executive Councils usually contain at least one member who is an Indian and not a member of the Indian Civil Service. The Viceroy's Council also contains a non-official Indian member.

This feature of the different Executive Councils, however desirable in theory, is open to serious objection in practice. A non-official Indian, not having any administrative experi-

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\*The above, written in 1916, is, so far as it goes, in substantial agreement with the views expressed in the Report of the Calcutta University Commission. There is much of value in that report, particularly the discussion of the use and abuse of the examination system. As a College don, one-fourth of whose academic life is wasted in helping to carry on examinations three-fourths of which are educationally useless, I heartily concur in the suggestion that portions of the Calcutta University Commission Report be printed and circulated to University Professors throughout the United Kingdom. *February, 1920.*

† In 1915.



ence, must, when appointed to such a Council, be given a department in which, if he cannot do much good, he will not be able to do much harm. He probably comes from the free and easy atmosphere of the Bar, and, after spending a few years in office, returns to the same surroundings. If he has been a real member of an Executive Council, and not a mere departmental figurehead, he must have acquired a certain knowledge of the "*arcana imperii*," and it is asking too much of human nature to expect that when he returns to professional life he will observe a wise discretion with regard to these matters in his conversation with colleagues whose loyalty is sometimes open to suspicion. I have seen it asserted that in practice such non-official members of Executive Councils are not taken into the confidence of the other members, probably for this very reason, and the consequences are almost equally objectionable from another point of view. Unless there is a free interchange of opinions and information amongst the members of such a Council these become simply the bureaucratic heads of isolated departments, and are able to clothe their own pet whims or aversions with all the authority of the "Governor" or "Lieutenant-Governor in Council,"\* and the unfortunate District Officer can never feel quite sure whether that high-sounding authority has really been consulted at all, and, if not, with what particular member of, or Secretary to, the Local Government he really has to do.

The different Provinces have Legislative Councils, containing a majority of Indian members, some of whom are appointed by a semi-popular form of election. Subject to the approval of the Governor-General in Council, and also of the India Office, these bodies may enact legislation of a purely provincial character. A certain amount of provincial autonomy thus exists. It is said to be a diminishing quantity, however, and the Legislative Council of the Governor-General occasionally passes Acts on subjects with which a Provincial Legislature might be expected to deal.

Absolute, or even approximate, uniformity is not characteristic of our system of administration in India. As that country came gradually under British rule, each successive portion annexed was given that form of administration which seemed to meet its individual requirements best. At the present moment the system varies between province and province, and even as between different districts in the same province.

Generally speaking, the lack of uniformity is more conspicuous in details than in principles. Consequently, if we give a general description of the actual working of adminis-

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\* Bihar, although governed by a Lieutenant-Governor, has an Executive Council.

tration in a province which has been for a long time under British rule, and where the system is fairly well developed, the statements will have a wider application than the particular province referred to.

The partition of Bengal by Lord Curzon in 1906 was so unpopular that it was modified under somewhat dramatic circumstances in 1911. Under the new arrangement, Assam has been cut off on the east and set up as a Chief Commissionership. A new province—Bihar—has been constituted out of the old administrative province of Bengal, and the remainder of the latter—Bengal proper—has received a Governor appointed by the Crown. It is in the province of Bihar that we are specially interested.

The head of its Local Government is a Lieutenant-Governor assisted by an Executive Council. Territorially it is cut up into five Divisions, each under a Commissioner. These Divisions consist of a number of Districts, administered by officials who bear the joint title of District Magistrate and Collector. For administrative convenience the District is usually subdivided, but the District as a whole is the most important territorial unit of local administration. The Commissioner's office is little more than a clearing-house between the Magistrate-Collector on the one hand and the Local Government on the other. In the hierarchy of the Civil Service it is not indispensable, and in Madras it does not exist at all. But the basis of Local Government throughout India is everywhere the District. The latter is a kind of microcosm of the Government of India as a whole. In its organisation it is a self-subsistent entity to an extent which it is difficult for people from home to realise. During the Indian Mutiny those districts that were not actually the scene of hostilities were scarcely disturbed in the ordinary routine of administration. In the case of Ireland last Easter, the temporary occupation of Dublin by a couple of thousand insurgents brought the civil administration of practically the whole island to a standstill.

The "Kacheri," i.e., the buildings which contain the Government offices and Law Courts of an Indian District, is a scene of varied activity. Here "munsiffs" and subordinate judges administer civil "justice," or at any rate give decrees. Here also the District and Sessions Judge holds his court. Criminal law is here enforced by the District Magistrate and his staff of Deputy Magistrates, usually by the latter. The former has a room in this building where he occasionally tries some case that demands his special attention, or hears revenue appeals. His connection with criminal law consists chiefly in the fact that the Magistrates who administer it are his official subordinates, and most of his personal attention is given to purely financial and administrative business. He

is also head of the police, but though he is directly responsible to Government for the peace of his district, in practice the District Superintendent of Police has a large measure of autonomy. On occasion, however, the District Magistrate plays quite a heroic part, as will appear from a little anecdote narrated later on.

The District and Sessions Judge, usually a "Civilian," occupies an independent position with reference to the District Magistrate. As District Judge he hears appeals from the courts of the munsiffs and most of those from the subordinate judges. The next Court of Appeal is the High Court, to which a few cases from the file of the subordinate judges go direct. As Sessions Judge he hears appeals from the decisions of "first class" magistrates and deals with important cases committed to him by the latter after preliminary investigation.

The competence of a magistrate varies with his class. When young Civilians go out to India they are, as it were, apprenticed to a District Magistrate. They begin as third-class magistrates, then rise to the second class, and finally to the first. At the first two stages their appeals, in common with those of other magistrates of these classes, go to the District Magistrate, who is thus enabled to inform himself of their progress and keep a check on the work they do.

The system is said to involve a combination of executive and judicial functions in the same hands. This is to some extent true of the District Magistrate and Collector, though personally his functions are mainly executive. His control of the police is also criticised unfavourably on the ground that he catches the thief with one hand and condemns him, either directly or by the agency of his Deputy Magistrates, with the other. It is said that the latter, since they depend on him for promotion, and cannot afford to lose his good opinion, will not give a decision of which he disapproves. The fact that Deputy Magistrates do a great deal of financial and executive as well as purely magisterial work is commented on unfavourably. It is further pointed out that the District and Sessions Judge, though personally independent of the District Magistrate, is not independent of the Local Government, to which he must look for further promotion. The average Civilian before he finally settles down in one or other capacity will have held many acting appointments, now judicial, now executive. This does not meet with approval in certain quarters, and it is urged that a complete separation of judicial and executive functions should take place, at any rate as regards the more "advanced" provinces, and that while the former should be filled by Indian barrister-judges dependent on the High Court for promotion, Indian Civilians should confine themselves exclusively to the latter.

Briefly, this is the case made out against this aspect of the present system. Before dealing with it any further, it will be necessary to give some account of its actual working as at present constituted and of some of the problems with which it is confronted.

A little book called "Round the Kacheri," written by an anonymous author and published by Thacker, Spink and Co., Calcutta, gives some delightful characterisations, including one of the District Magistrate. It begins by describing the District Magistrate in the words used by the "lean and hungry Cassius" of an "almost equally eminent individual."

"Why man, he doth bestride the narrow world  
Like a Colossus; and we petty men  
Walk under his huge legs, and peep about  
To find ourselves dishonourable graves."

Some inkling of his multifarious duties may be derived from the following enumeration. "Law, economics, engineering, agriculture, archæology, ethnology, sanitary science, estate management, cadastral survey, excise, police, and municipal administration, all combined with more than a *soupeçon* of psychology and philosophy, are only a few of the miscellaneous matters which he is expected to be thoroughly conversant with, and which would infallibly derange the balance of any lesser brain."

The qualities which the proper exercise of his functions requires are nearly as numerous as the latter are themselves.

"Besides the omniscience of the heaven-born and the physical energy of the galley-slave, the District Magistrate must possess the tact of a diplomatist combined with the firmness of a London policeman, the urbanity of an aide-de-camp combined with the pugnacity of a pugilist, the opportunism of a politician combined with the finality of an editor, the ambiguity of an ancient oracle combined with the positiveness of a modern critic, the strategy of a soldier combined with the driving power of a sailing-ship mate, and last, but far from least, the tenacity of a bulldog tinged with the obstinacy of a well-known quadruped."

The day's work of the District Magistrate will give a fair sample of his manifold activities. If you are his guest he will probably have got in a very respectable morning's work in his office before you are up. Breakfast usually takes place about noon in the Anglo-Indian household, and for an hour or two before this the great man will be besieged with callers. His subordinates of various kinds will call to make reports or obtain instructions. Local Indian gentlemen will call "to pay their respects." An organiser of co-operative societies may call to ask him to lend his prestige to the founding of such a society in his district. The District Engineer will call to talk over the peripatetic tendencies of the Ganges,

and devise ways and means for encouraging that river to stay where it is. After breakfast he may have a sleep for an hour or so—an almost universal custom in tropical climates. When he awakes, like a giant refreshed, he may rush down to a meeting of a District Board or Municipal Council, and it will not be his fault if the business is not got through with a promptitude and despatch rendered necessary by the fact that a hundred and one other things are awaiting his immediate attention, and worthy of imitation by other and more august assemblies.

If there is no such meeting to attend, the District Magistrate may possibly seize a moment to reply to some troublesome letter from the Local Government, which is always in a chronic state of wanting to know everything about things of great or little importance. This appetite for reports is a very great nuisance to District Officers, who sometimes say that the people at headquarters have so little work of their own to do that, in order to keep themselves moderately busy, they are constantly demanding from their overworked subordinates in the districts reports on any subject in which they take a passing interest.

Formerly, when facilities for communication were less developed, the District Magistrate had to be left a wide margin of discretionary power, which did not, however, shock the political sensibilities of the people, to whom he was, in Indian phrase, "feeder of the poor" and "father and mother." Nowadays the amount left to his discretion is a diminishing quantity, and he is rapidly becoming a machine which must move only at the will of the gods who dwell in Darjeeling or Simla, and which is constantly grinding out reports for their intellectual and æsthetic edification.

The Indian Government has been accused of not being sufficiently sensitive to the voice of Indian public opinion as manifested in the vernacular Press and in other ways. With some exceptions, the standard of vernacular newspapers is not very high, though people who live in these islands have no right to be surprised at this. However, no matter how ignominious the paper or how worthless the scribe who has written it, if an article appears making any complaint about the administration of a certain district the chances are that the Local Government will ask the District Magistrate to account for the mountain of the published story by investigating and reporting in detail on the molehill of fact out of which it has been made.

### **Apropos of Bureaucracy.**

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The system of government in force in India is generally described as "bureaucracy." That word has, for various

reasons, become coated with the mud of political controversy, so that, whatever the merits or demerits of the principle of government it describes, the word itself now belongs to the same category as those members of the canine species which are only fit to be handed over to the common hangman. Whatever its faults, the constitution of government in India makes possible a scientific and disinterested solution of questions of public importance, and that is more than we can say of democracy as it exists at home. In commending this feature of Indian Government, lest I should incur the odium of seeming to praise "bureaucracy," let me hasten to explain that what I regard as the ideal form of government is not bureaucracy at all, but "epistemonocracy," a word I have just coined and which cannot as yet have any unpopular associations. Shakespeare's dictum about "that which we call a rose" was surely never meant to apply to matters of political controversy.

Some years ago it was my privilege to hear a prominent member of the Irish Party holding forth to a cultured audience on the problems of Indian government. He declared, amid resounding cheers, with all the ignorance of a politician, that we in Ireland knew all about the evils of the Indian "bureaucracy," since we had ourselves been living under a bureaucratic form of government for upwards of a century. The tragedy was not that the speaker was so ignorant, but that the audience, including the writer, were equally ignorant, and not one was found to question the accuracy of the false analogy he had propounded as a matter of commonplace fact. With fuller knowledge, since obtained, of the leading characteristics of both Governments, all I can say is that if the system of administration in Ireland had been half as flexible, economical, efficient, impartial in matters of religion, considerate of social ideals, practical in its attitude to economic problems, and humane and just in the maintenance of law and order as the so-called Indian "bureaucracy" has on the whole proved itself to be during the same period, the history of Ireland would not have been a record of misgovernment and coercion, of corruption and maladministration, of evils tardily recognised and imperfectly removed, and finally of political unscrupulousness playing on the prejudices of one or other section of the populace for party ends till the country was driven to the verge of a civil war, from which we were only saved by the occurrence of a much greater calamity, to which it was undoubtedly a contributing cause.

Etymologically, bureaucracy means office government, and I think that describes its essential nature. It is the rule of a cast-iron officialdom whose instruments have ceased to be human beings, and are merely machines. Every effort is

usually made to induce its victims to develop the same convenient character, as machines are much more easily managed than human beings. There is usually a complete absence of personal relationship between rulers and ruled. The former on taking office become a kind of logical abstraction or spiritual essence, which can only be communicated with through a medium, and rarely, if ever, is seen by the ordinary man in the garb of the flesh while acting in an official capacity.

If this be a true account of the essence of bureaucracy, then possibly the spirit of the Government of India and its different Local Governments is bureaucratic. The high officials at their various headquarters are out of personal touch with the problems which they undertake to solve. The atmosphere of Calcutta or Darjeeling is not the atmosphere of what is called the "mofussil"—that is, the territory which is not in the immediate neighbourhood of a Local Government headquarters.

I doubt, however, whether the term bureaucratic can be applied to the spirit in which District Officers exercise their functions. True they are officials, but the official is in this case indistinguishable from the individual, and the nature of his work brings him into personal contact with the people, individually and collectively, for whose welfare he is responsible. Nothing surprised me more than the ease with which even the humblest Indians can approach important officers of the administration and lay their complaint, or whatever it is, before them. In the "cold weather," when District Officers go on tour, special facilities exist for this informal intercourse; in fact, it is in order that they may inform themselves at first hand of the actual condition of the people that they are required to tour.

While such an official is familiar with the problems of his district from wider points of view, he constantly realises the necessity of making allowance for the personal equation, and his accuracy in gauging it will determine very largely the success of his administration. He can never forget the human being in the philosophical abstraction or the scientific formula, and he is not likely to attach too much importance to a mythological conception like the "economic man."

Most of the high officials of Government have had experience at one time or other of work in the mofussil, but somehow the outlook of a Secretariat, whatever may have been the previous experience of the holders of positions therein gets limited by the four walls of its official abode, and District Officers complain that it is often out of touch with many of the problems in which it interests itself, and out of sympathy with the difficulties they encounter in confronting them. Of late years a tendency towards undue and premature specialisation of function has made matters worse in

this respect. Comparatively inexperienced Indian Civilians are promoted to a junior position in the Secretariat; later on they come down and spend a few short years in the mofussil in an official capacity. Finally, they are translated once more to the seventh heaven of Darjeeling or Simla, with the result that most of their official life is spent in surroundings not essentially different from London or Paris, and they never thoroughly master characteristic problems of Indian administration as they affect the mofussil.

The tendency is to lessen the authority of the District Officers, but they still retain a certain amount of discretionary power. Moreover, as the system is organised on the very sound principle that one man, and one man only—the Magistrate-Collector—is the responsible head of the whole executive and administrative work in his district, he is able to ensure that the different departments at work act together in harmony without overlapping and waste of energy, and if there is anything that requires legislative remedy or the attention of a higher administrative power, it is his business to have such matters brought to the notice of the proper authorities. The District Officers are the hand and eye of the Government, and a policy only exists on paper or in the brain of a high official until it has been enforced in the actual conditions to which it must be applied. The latter requires the instrumentality and co-operation of the District Officers, and from the point of view of the dweller in the mofussil, whether European or Indian, the manner in which they exercise their functions is the all-important thing.

If the essence of bureaucracy is such as it has been described, it is not a proper term to apply to the very flexible and business-like organisation of administration with which the mofussil is familiar. On the other hand, the Irish politician was quite right in describing Irish administration as bureaucratic. As a matter of fact, the spirit of public administration in the whole of the United Kingdom is bureaucratic—though in Ireland the evil exists in an aggravated form.

Some time ago an Indian Civilian with considerable experience as Magistrate-Collector was spending a portion of his leave in the north of England. He came across a dispensary doctor who was hard put to it to find accommodation for patients in the local general hospital, as an epidemic of some kind had just broken out. It appears that a local small-pox hospital was quite empty, but the doctor never thought of trying to obtain the use of it, as it was probable that before the necessary authority could be obtained from some Department or other in London the epidemic would be over. The Indian official was amazed. "Why," said he, "if that had



happened in India you would have gone to the Magistrate-Collector, and he would have arranged the whole thing by a stroke of the pen."

Local administration in the United Kingdom is largely in the hands of elected councils, who cannot readily be held responsible for their actions or failure to act. Parliament passes laws with the most virtuous intentions, and they become a dead letter because the machinery to which their administration is entrusted will not move and cannot be compelled to move.

When Parliament really intends a law to be administered it has to make its own arrangements for it, but the machinery of central administration, viewed as a whole, is equally unsatisfactory, owing to a characteristic weakness or vice of the English character as reflected in English institutions. The British Parliament never by any chance considers a problem as a whole, and will never legislate comprehensively if, as is usually possible, it can tide over the immediate difficulty by piecemeal legislation. The whole problem of administration, central and local, has never been envisaged as such, and an attempt made to solve it on some definite and generally intelligible principles. In this respect the peoples of the Anglo-Saxon race stand almost alone in the civilised world.

Existing administrative departments are absolutely stereotyped in character, and each one of them can only carry out functions which it is empowered to perform within the meaning of some Act of Parliament or other. The result is that when the State breaks new ground, as it was doing constantly in pre-war days in the interests of "social reform," it has to create new machinery of administration as well as pass new laws. The Insurance Commission, the Development Commission, and the Land Valuation Department will readily occur as cases in point. In fact, nearly every big Act of Parliament of the late Liberal Government involved the creation of a new department of administration, and if the process continues after the war, and an honest attempt is not made to place the whole organisation of national and local administration on a business-like footing, the chaos and the confusion it causes in the mind of the ordinary man is bound to increase.

The gibe against Mr. Lloyd George that the chief object of his legislation seemed to be to create new officials was scarcely deserved,\* and it would have been more patriotic on the part of the Opposition to have assailed those characteristics of our administrative system which make a new department necessary for the administration of nearly every new Act.

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\* I have altered my opinion on this point.

The efforts of the Imperial Parliament to improve the condition of Ireland by legislative means have resulted in even greater administrative confusion, for precisely the same reasons. The only branch of Irish administration that has ever been efficiently organised is the repressive branch, and its recent failure in the case of the Ulster movement and the Sinn Fein insurrection was entirely due to the weakness or incompetence of its political chiefs. In the brave days of old, when there were serious social and economic grievances, it was instrumental in having passed a series of Coercion Acts, and it enforced these with a courage worthy of a better cause. The beneficent side of Irish administration has developed independently, and is represented by institutions like the Congested Districts Board, the Department of Agriculture, the Land Commission, and so on. These are, as it were, the sea wrack thrown up by successive waves of legislation, and scarcely any attempt\* has ever been made to co-ordinate their functions, though the desirability of doing so is universally admitted, and it would probably be found that the work now distributed haphazard amongst about thirty or forty branches of administration (nobody knows the exact number of Government Departments at work in Ireland) could be performed more efficiently and economically by about ten.

The Magistrate-Collector of an Indian District unites in his single person both the repressive and beneficent aspects of administration. If a riot takes place it is his duty to have it suppressed. In the event of famine, flood, or pestilence he is the first to bring aid to the sufferers. In his reports to Government he can not only describe symptoms, but diagnose diseases and suggest a fundamental remedy.

Dublin Castle was well served by its police, almost the only service that was "deconcentrated" and organised on a definite territorial principle; but a police officer is not to be expected to be able to do more than describe symptoms, and the remedies suggested or adopted in the evil days of the past † too often took the very unscientific form of attempts to stamp out these. I cannot help thinking that if the four provinces of Ireland had had subordinate officials like Magistrate-Collectors in general charge of their administration and uniting in their persons both aspects of administrative authority, other and more scientific remedies for social and economic disease would have been pressed on the attention of the authorities, reforms would have been obtained with greater ease and without the ill-grace that characterises a

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\* The only one I can recall at the moment was made by Lord Macdonnell, when Under Secretary for Ireland. Lord Macdonnell had a distinguished career in the Indian Civil Service.

† And present (December, 1919).

concession to popular agitation, Dublin Castle would not be a by-word for laziness and inefficiency, and the problem of a separate Legislature for Ireland would have sunk to its proper proportions.\* Through long habituation to the methods of British government in Ireland, the people of that country are scarcely aware that there is a separate and distinguishable problem of administration at all, and are likely to find that if they do obtain an Irish Parliament and the solution of that problem is not immediately taken in hand, that nothing has been changed, but that there is only one more talking-shop in the British Islands.†

### The work of a District-Magistrate.

Let us return to the District Magistrate and accompany him as he goes from his office or from a Board meeting to the Kacheri. If you are privileged to enter the precincts and sit on the bench by his side you will see an interesting sight. The wall opposite will probably be adorned with cheap prints of the King and Queen, on a par, as regards artistic excellence, with the variety usually met with in a very second-class lodging-house. Presently the court will fill with a motley throng of policemen, litigants, witnesses, and members of the legal fraternity, from the "mukhtear" (solicitor) with his little straw hat that touches the crown of his head at a tangent, and his shirt outside his trousers or "dhoti," to the Public Prosecutor in full European dress and the dignified robes of his legal qualifications.

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\* Such a reform would have no effect on the present situation (December, 1919).

† I still think that administrative reform is important, though I am not quite so positive about the desirability of organising *every* branch of the Central Government on lines analogous to the French and Indian systems.

The Ministry of Labour has divided the British Islands up into a number of Districts, and over each is placed a District Director who seems to exercise a good deal of delegated authority, with the most satisfactory results so far as I have been able to observe. No doubt the system could be extended to other Departments with advantage.

The most profitable as well as the most practicable course is to redistribute the functions of public administration amongst a limited number of Departments, according to the character of the several kinds of business to be dealt with by each, as recommended by the Report of the Ministry of Reconstruction.

A reform of local administration, freeing the County, Rural and Urban Councils from the legislative fetters in which they are bound, raising the standard of efficiency required from their officials, and eliminating the objectionable features of their present method of appointment, would go a long way to realise the advantages possessed by the Indian system without sacrificing any of those characteristic of our own.

On the whole question the reader is advised to consult W. H. Dawson's able study of "Municipal Life and Government in Germany."

Possibly a number of cultivators, who formerly belonged to a joint family, but have had their holdings distributed, will appeal for a modification of the principle of distribution in favour of one that suits their particular convenience better. They will probably employ a mukhtear, who will take as long as, or longer than, the court will listen, hoping that he will be heard for much speaking, and desiring to convince his clients, from whom he has probably extracted the necessary fee before coming into court, that he has fully earned the money he has received. In such cases the District Magistrate will probably dismiss the case, as experience proves that if a new distribution was granted on *ex parte* representations, a new and worse crop of grievances on the part of the other persons affected would form the subject of further appeals. The Magistrate will probably go on to some other business, but meanwhile the mukhtear is still talking. The Magistrate, knowing his object, will not abruptly stop him, but may possibly request him to sit down after he has satisfied his client that he has talked enough to earn his fee.

"Round the Kacheri" contains some delightful remarks about mukhteers—the "younger son branch of the prolific legal family in which the barrister, the 'vakil,' and the pleader represent the senior and more affluent branches." He is educated up to the Matriculation standard of the Calcutta University, and he is let loose on the country after passing an examination held under the auspices of the High Court. The supply of mukhteers exceeds the demand, though the latter is great enough to be one of the most serious social problems of India. In the absence of legitimate occupation, according to the authority mentioned above, "he is generally deeply involved in the local intrigues of party faction, but he may also be acting as the captious correspondent of some vernacular newspaper, or acquiring a useful reputation as a resourceful writer of anonymous petitions.

"One school of political economists holds that the labour of all lawyers is unproductive, but the mukhtear, though he is certainly a parasite, is most prolific in one respect—the propagation of litigation. The cases that he fathers are quite as numerous as those that are naturally generated by some legal cause of action. Under his paternal solicitude, an exchange of abuse develops speedily into a one-sided assault, and, if the court considers assaults venial without visible signs of their effects, he will even manufacture the missing marks with a minimum amount of corporal inconvenience. He is, however, seen at his best when his creative faculties have virgin material to operate on. His client contributes nothing except a lively sense of his own liability for some illegal action, and it is the mukhtear's function to convert the aggressor into the aggrieved, and concoct the spurious

story that is considered the most effective counter that can be made to a criminal complaint. Like the poet, his imagination 'bodies forth the forms of things unknown,' while his pen 'turns them to shapes' in a petition of complaint. Provided only with a fickle foundation of adverse fact, he draws on a fertile imagination for the bricks of a comparatively unstable edifice intended merely to weather summary demolition at the complaint stage. Sufficient for the day is the evil done thereon, however, and he knows that the mortar of evidence necessary to make his building more durable is as inexpensive and as plentiful as dirt. Fortunately for the interests of justice, from whose blind eyes such artistic structures would be too often hidden, the ignorance that induces confidence in the mukhtear's methods often betrays them also. The coached client of imperfect understanding and uncertain memory commonly contradicts his written petition under oral examination, and is then easily convinced by his legal mentor that the dismissal of his complaint is due entirely to his own shortcomings."

In this country, if the prosecuting barrister was a brother or cousin of the presiding judge, the fact would cause no comment and arouse no fear of a miscarriage of justice. In India, however, if it is known that a certain deputy magistrate is to try a case, and if there is a practising lawyer available who is a near relation of his, there will be a vigorous attempt made by both parties to obtain his services. The party that fails to secure him will probably apply to the District Magistrate to transfer the case to some other magistrate who is presumably impartial, and the request will probably be granted, whether or not the District Magistrate considers that there is any ground for the apprehension that, without such transfer, the trial would not be impartial. The important point is that both parties obviously think that the relationship of one of the lawyers to the magistrate who tries the case would influence the course and result of the trial, and the District Magistrate does not consider it desirable that an atmosphere of suspicion should hang round the proceedings of any of his subordinate courts. This is an evil which can only be removed by the voluntary action of members of the legal profession in raising the standard of their professional etiquette until, like Cæsar's wife, they are above suspicion. In the meanwhile, those members of that profession who have its best interests at heart would do well, even at the cost of some personal self-sacrifice, to refrain from accepting briefs in such circumstances until a condition of the public mind has been created in which they can do so without suspicion.

I came across an incident when in India which is also interesting in this connection. There was a case of disputed

succession to an estate worth several millions of pounds. The Court of Wards favoured the claims of candidate X. Candidate Y appeared on the scene, and his case was taken up by lawyers C and D. The legal dispute got the length of the High Court, where it was compromised, Y being given the estate while X was given a large sum of money as a "solatium." Much money must have changed hands in the form of lawyers' fees; no sooner, however, was the case fairly won for Y than a quarrel arose between him and C and D. By a fortunate coincidence, a third candidate, Z, now appeared on the scene, to whose cause C and D attached themselves. The case was about to come up for trial when I was in India, and C and D seemed determined to carry it, if necessary, to the Privy Council. In conversation with me, C expressed himself very bitterly about Y, his former client, and now the client of his legal opponents. The pickings for the lawyers were likely to be enormous, and when I said to one of these that it was a pity to see the wealth of an ancient estate squandered in litigation, he replied, "What does it matter? The estate is worth three crores." This same lawyer posed as a democrat and a friend of the people, and was a Nationalist politician of the extreme school. It does not seem to have occurred to him whether the tenants on this estate, who were, presumably, the source of all its wealth, were likely to be affected injuriously or otherwise by their landlord being reduced to beggary. Meanwhile, candidate X was probably nursing his grievance, and very likely had lawyers hovering round him like vultures round a dying bullock, who were licking their chops (to change the metaphor) in anticipation of a coming feast.

The significant fact, for the present purpose, that emerges from all this is that lawyers C and D were guilty of conduct, in transferring their services from Y to Z, which in this country, I should hope, would be regarded as unprofessional. They had fought and won his case for Y, and in that capacity must have obtained an inside knowledge of the facts which, as the enemies of Y, they could scarcely refrain from using with disastrous results to the cause of their former client. Of course, the whole practice of law is dishonest and hypocritical, but I doubt whether legal etiquette would allow the members of that profession so much rope at home.

When the business of the Kacheri has been satisfactorily transacted, the Collector-Magistrate will rush home for a cup of afternoon tea preparatory to paying a visit to the club, where every European in the station who is anybody invariably turns up for the afternoon and evening. The great man will probably arrive rather late, and will be lucky if he gets in a couple of sets of tennis before the rapidly gathering darkness drives everyone from the courts to the billiard-room,

card tables, or music-room. There are Europeans, however, in India as elsewhere, who love darkness rather than light, and individuals of both sexes occasionally remain outside when everyone else has gone in, to smoke, gossip, or provide a subject of gossip for others. Into that aspect of Anglo-Indian life, however, it is unnecessary to enter.

Executive Officers generally, and the District Magistrate in particular, are expected to spend a large portion of the cold weather "on tour." The "benign" Government provides two large tents for each officer. He is accompanied by a large staff of servants, personal and official, and one misses none of the more important comforts of civilisation when out in the wilderness. When the touring officer arrives at his destination for the time being, he will probably find that his servants have already had the tents and all the heavy baggage brought there, and will have nothing to do at first but sit down and have a good square meal.

If his guest has imagined that the whole thing is a kind of pic-nic, he will probably be surprised at the appearance presently of the "type babu" and the Public Prosecutor. When I was in camp under these conditions the District Magistrate had to interview a Hindu lady whose ideas were so advanced that she eloped with her Mahommedan tutor. She was in semi-purdah, and appeared accompanied by a member of her family. Her lover was accused of having kidnapped her, and very important legal questions revolved round the problem of her age, which in India is apt to be a very difficult problem to solve. There were other legal complications also, and when I heard last, about a year later, the case was still going merrily on; doubtless it has proved a lucrative source of income to more than one of the social parasites who live by the law.

If our host has a few minutes to spare at any time in the morning he may take the opportunity of writing one or other of the reports he is constantly making to the Local Government. He will also receive occasional reports from his subordinate officers. During my presence in camp a deputy magistrate, who had charge of the preliminary investigation of a murder case, sent in a report explaining on what grounds he had discharged the accused, and asking for confirmation of his action. The case illustrates the methods of the Indian police and the tendency on the part of the prosecution to spoil a case by trying to make the evidence too good. Very strong circumstantial evidence tended to show that the accused had poisoned the deceased, but the analyst discovered one kind of poison by *post-mortem* examination, while the police found two different kinds of poison in household utensils to which the accused had access. The trying magistrate, influenced by this incongruity, which was probably emphasised

for a good deal more than it was worth by the defending lawyer, wanted to release the accused. The District Magistrate, having a long experience of such cases, saw at once what had probably happened, and ordered a further investigation. The police, in their eagerness to have a good case, and suspecting poison already, had presumably put the poison where they afterwards "found" it, but unfortunately it did not correspond to the poison that had actually killed the man. Very possibly the accused was in the end returned for trial, in which case the matter would come before the Sessions Judge, with a possible appeal to the High Court. The District Magistrate, however, has no control whatever over either of these two courts. This is a fair sample of the combination of judicial and executive functions, which is a matter of such complaint in some quarters. The District Magistrate's control of the subordinate magistracy, and the familiarity with police methods which his past experience had given him, enabled him in this case to help in securing the ends of justice without in any way prejudicing the final result of the trial. If the magistrate who conducted the preliminary investigation had had to report to an officer whose experience was entirely judicial, not having the inner knowledge of the methods of the police, which only executive office can give, the chances are that he too would have been deceived.

Happenings like these in camp make the stranger realise that wherever the District Magistrate is, there the administration is. At home we can scarcely dissociate the administration of law from permanent Government offices and imposing courthouses. When an Indian official is on tour, the awning of his tent is his office or courthouse, and a table, a chair, and some pieces of foolscap are all the furniture that is needed. Some of his most salutary influence is exercised by personal contact with the people themselves, and does not require even these accessories. A recent visitation of plague was inquired into informally by the District Magistrate when passing through the afflicted neighbourhood on his way to the camp mentioned above. I have been out riding with a subdivisional officer who was accompanied by an Indian from the fields, and the two maintained during a large part of the way an animated conversation, which I afterwards discovered referred largely to crops and to the state of cultivation in that part of the country. When on tour, and even when at headquarters, they can be approached with fewer intermediaries than would be necessary at home, and without the unrolling of large quantities of red tape. Owing to this circumstance they are enabled to keep in close personal touch with the people of different parts of their districts, and the result is most salutary. A famine in one district or a flood in another is likely to affect a Government officer much more



intimately if he has mixed among the actual sufferers than if he has only read a report of it at headquarters, however well written that report might be. In the United Kingdom there are no officers in general charge of the administration of their respective territorial units whose duty it is to tour and familiarise themselves with the human, which ought to be the essential, aspect of administrative problems. Everything is centralised, or rather departmentalised, in Westminster or Dublin. In the atmosphere of a metropolitan office the cry of suffering from Caithness or Kerry is heard very indistinctly. If the system of administration had been decentralised and the country divided into provinces, each under the general control of an officer responsible to the Home Office, the mismanagement in connection with separation allowances at the beginning of the war would probably not have occurred. According to George Bernard Shaw, the only remedy for the notorious fact that soldiers' wives were starving, which the War Office could at first devise was to request any woman who was not receiving her separation allowance to write to, or preferably call at, the War Office, when the matter would be set to rights. For obvious reasons, probably not many letters were written, and I dare say only a few soldiers' wives travelled from Donegal or Inverness to have their claims inquired into.\*

In India, France, and Japan, in fact almost everywhere except in the United Kingdom and the United States, the people, in however remote a district, always know where to write or whom to visit if it is necessary to bring something to the attention of the administration. When there is a subordinate administrative officer with general powers in charge of a relatively small territorial unit, everyone living in that unit knows about him and where he is to be found. Such an officer acts as a kind of focus of all the activities of the administration. If a matter is referred to him he will probably in many cases be able to attend to it himself, or if it is outside the scope of his authority, will bring it to the notice of the proper department. In Ireland he would be a bold man who would say offhand that something solely concerns the Congested District Board or something else is the proper function of the Board of Works. The average citizen has not the remotest idea what the business of the different departments of administration is, and if he has

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\* The difficulty about the separation allowances was put right by a War Office official who, happening to be in a remote country town on private business, was able to discover where the shoe pinched. Although he had no administrative concern in the matter, being a human being he took the risk of being told to mind his own business, and made representations to the higher authorities which resulted in his being given *carte blanche* provided he would undertake to settle the difficulty

occasion to write about a matter of public or private importance, the chances are he will have to write two or three letters before he can get into touch with an office which admits its competence to deal with the case.

To get back to our District Magistrate. He may possibly have a district from which coolies are recruited for the tea plantations at Assam. The system of coolie catching, and the treatment of coolies on the plantations, was one of the gravest blots on our administration in India, but it has recently been modified for the better. Recruiters of different kinds were sent down from Assam to different districts in Bengal and elsewhere, and there they drew a glorious picture of the earthly paradise that awaited the unlettered, but possibly dissatisfied, cultivator if he would only come with him to Assam. It was a notorious fact, however, that, like the lion's den, though many tracks led to Assam, there were very few leading back from it, and at the same time the population of Assam did not show any corresponding increase. In these circumstances, District Officers did not display any marked sympathy with the efforts of the tea interests to attract labour from their districts. As soon as they were caught the coolies were placed under a contract which it was criminal to break, and were stored in coolie depôts prior to transportation. These depôts are often inspected by District Officers when on tour, and it sometimes happens that the arrangements with regard to sanitation and general comfort and decency leave much to be desired. They are surrounded by a high wall like a prison, and might well have the inscription over the entrance door: "Abandon Hope, all ye who enter here." I may have a word to say about this subject later on, but it is worth noting now that though it was for a long time a serious social and economic grievance, it did not play a prominent part in the programme of the Indian "democratic" parties. On the other hand the present improved condition of affairs owes a great deal to the disinterested but thankless efforts of District Officers of Government, ably seconded by a number of missionaries who objected on the soundest humanitarian and Christian principles to this traffic in human beings

### **The work of a Joint-Magistrate.**

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In some Districts in addition to the Collector Magistrate you may have a "Joint Magistrate" who is also an Indian civilian. In the absence of his chief he becomes Magistrate in Charge at headquarters as a matter of course, but his ordinary work is substantially the same as that of an Indian or Eurasian Deputy Magistrate who belongs to the "Provincial" service.

I have sat in court with such a magistrate while a number of different matters were being attended to. Now he is dealing with some current correspondence which in the absence of the Collector comes to him. Presently a number of Indians come in one after the other with a variety of muskets of all ages and types. They are coming to have their licences renewed, a process which in India is not a device for raising revenue, but a method of preventing fire-arms from getting into the hands of "improper" persons. The gun that is licensed is given an identification mark, indented in the metal, and it is the verification of this which involves the weapon being produced in court. Doubtless these precautions are necessary in order to keep a check on the number and quality of fire-arms in the possession of Indians. The law makes a distinction in the matter as between Europeans and Indians which is said to be resented by the latter. Apparently Europeans can obtain and use fire-arms without any formality whatever. There are, however, plenty of low-class people in India of European blood who are quite capable of obtaining fire-arms in order to pass them on to Indians of revolutionary tendencies. There is ground for suspecting that this actually has happened. The extension of the same restrictions to Europeans as to Indians would make no material difference to most Europeans, and, while conciliating Indian opinion, would render the law itself more effective.

While the Joint Magistrate's Court is disposing of these or other matters, his guest may be startled at the appearance of a leopard outside on the verandah. However, the leopard is by this time quite harmless, and is being carried on a pole by four men who have come to claim the reward given by the Government for the destruction of these animals. The particular one that I saw had been slain with a spear by a local village watchman in a most matter-of-fact manner. If any European had so successfully imitated the youthful exploits of David, his renown would have been great even in the midst of a world war. After the money had been paid the skull of the leopard was broken. I wondered why: it was to prevent the leopard-slayer from visiting a few more Kacheris with the same leopard and claiming the appropriate reward on each occasion. In this connection the following story, which may or may not be true, is interesting. Government used to pay a reward for every venomous snake that was killed, and the system seemed to increase the mortality among snakes very much, to judge by the number of heads that were coming in. However, a sudden end was put to it when it was found that snake farms had been started whose owners carried on a lucrative business in rearing snakes for the Government market. Thus was a very promising native industry crushed by an unfeeling alien administration.

### The work of a Sub-Divisional Officer.

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The day's work of the Sub-Divisional Officer is very similar to that of the District Magistrate, though it is on a smaller scale. As already explained, when a District is too large it is divided into two or more Sub-Divisions with local headquarters, each administered by a Sub-Divisional Officer and his staff under the general supervision of the District Magistrate. Important matters are of course referred to him, but, as it is often twenty or thirty miles from District to Sub-Divisional Headquarters, in practice a great deal must be left to the discretion of the local officer-in-charge. As a general rule these officers are Indians or Eurasians who belong to the "Provincial" service, but in most districts at least one sub-division is administered by an Indian civilian who may be only about 25 or 26 years of age. In this capacity Indian civilians obtain a most valuable training for higher office. They are brought more intimately into contact with the people than even the District Magistrate is. It is even said that a man has more power for good or evil as Sub-Divisional Officer than he is ever likely to obtain again unless he becomes Lieutenant-Governor. The idea of large administrative powers of a general character being exercised by a very young man is very shocking to our parochial sentiments. Of course mistakes are occasionally made, and the ignorance or inexperience of young officers is occasionally taken advantage of by unscrupulous persons. But generally speaking, the working of the system shows that wisdom and common sense are not the monopoly of the old or middle-aged.

My attention was called to the existence of a "bund," or artificial embankment, in a certain district, which saved thousands of acres of land in the neighbourhood from the inroads of the Ganges. I supposed that it owed its existence to the administrative activity of a District Magistrate, and thought of the widespread destruction wrought by the Rivers Bann, Barrow and Shannon in my own country, where the organisation of administration is not particularly businesslike, and periodical representations by influential local deputations have only succeeded in extracting enormous quantities of "sympathy" from the benevolent hearts of successive Chief Secretaries. I was informed, however, that the whole thing was done by a Sub-Divisional Officer who was probably on the sunny side of thirty. The work was obviously of a reproductive, and not merely a philanthropic character. All that was necessary was to advance the money, which I daresay Government did almost for the asking, and at the same time to take measures by which interest and sinking fund should be paid by the people whose lands were made much more productive

by the result. If Ireland had had a sensible system of administration, most probably these troublesome rivers would long ago have been prevented from doing harm by the application of these or similar methods. Unfortunately, though we have a multiplicity of Departments of Government, more than one of which might be argued to have a responsibility in the matter, what is everybody's business becomes nobody's business, and things like this are not done. If we place an administrative officer in general charge of a district or subdivision he cannot escape responsibility if any of the affairs which come within his jurisdiction are mismanaged. As everyone knows who he is, he will be condemned by public opinion for his failure. He has thus every incentive to fulfil his functions honestly and efficiently. On the other hand, under the bureaucratic system we are familiar with at home, no one knows precisely what are the functions of each department, and if things go wrong the general public do not know what department, or what individual in a department, is to blame. Consequently departments and individuals alike escape all real responsibility for their activities. Of course we know that the political heads of departments are supposed to be responsible to Parliament, but anyone familiar with the joint family principles on which the party system is worked in times of peace by both front benches, and with the pretentious humbug that goes on in Parliament, will assign little importance to a mythical responsibility such as this.

If responsible government in matters of administration exists anywhere in the British Empire it exists in India, though its sanction is not the fear of offending a Parliamentary majority, but the feeling that the consequences of misgovernment or maladministration would be disastrous. At home we have responsible administration in theory but not in practice.

It is very instructive to go round with a Sub-Divisional Officer who is on tour. Like the District Magistrate, everywhere he goes he brings his Court and his Office, or at any rate his administrative functions, with him. As he drives along, rayats come running after him and pour complaints about this or that into his perhaps impatient ears. He cannot well attend to every complaint that he hears in this informal manner, but he obtains a lot of information in this way which may be useful in other connections. The interesting thing is that the people can come into this direct and personal relationship with the Government officer who is immediately responsible for their welfare. When on tour the S.D.O., as he is called for short, supervises aspects of the administration which he cannot well look after when at headquarters. If he were in a province where land revenue is periodically "settled" he would see that the amount of revenue credited by the "patwari" to individual rayats corresponded with the amount that

the latter actually paid, and that the balance did not find its way mysteriously into the former's pocket.

Villages and groups of villages in many parts of India still retain a relic of local self-government. They elect a "panchayat" or committee of five, who levy a tax for the payment of the village "chaukidar," or watchman. The latter functionaries are found very useful as beaters when the "Sahib" wants to shoot snipe. The "panch" are capable of favouring unduly their own friends and relations in the amount of the assessment and the S.D.O. occasionally verifies and checks their work with good results.

In many parts of India, notably in parts of Orissa, rent is still payable in kind. Some proportion, often a half, of the actual harvest, is the landlord's share. The system does not work well, and is found in practice to discourage agricultural enterprise on the part of the cultivator. If the landlord anticipates that the tenants will harvest and store the crops without giving him his due share he may apply to the S.D.O. to send a policeman to prevent them from carrying out their suspected intention. Cases have occurred where the landlord, being at loggerheads with his tenants, successfully made this request to an inexperienced magistrate, with the result that the tenants were so intimidated at this display of force that they feared to cut their crops at all, and allowed them to rot on the ground. No doubt the landlord had foreseen this, and was not altogether displeased at the actual result; his own loss was immaterial compared with the sweetness of satisfied revenge. The general tendency is to convert such tenancies into those of the ordinary kind where rent is paid in money. The S.D.O. is frequently charged with this duty, and its exercise involves or creates an intimate knowledge of the economic conditions of the people affected. The money rent is fixed in accordance with equitable principles, and is usually less than the money value of the average payment in kind. It is also found that the tenant, when he knows that everything he makes over and above his rent is his own, is a more enterprising agriculturist.

The S.D.O. performs much judicial work of the same character as that done by the first-class Deputy-Magistrate of a District. Much of it is involved in the cumbrous legal procedure which is the delight of lawyers and the despair of their victims. One of the worst mistakes of our Indian administration has been the extension of many of the expensive absurdities of English law to India under the mistaken idea that we were thereby conferring a boon on its people. These "guarantees" in the interest of the freedom of the subject are worthless, since they are accompanied by an expense which makes justice the monopoly of the rich. Litigation is a road to ruin only too often travelled by the common people, and

the man with the longest purse can generally win by exhausting his opponent. Procedure is complicated beyond the intelligence of the average Indian, and the proceedings are often carried on in a language which, even if a vernacular, is not perhaps understood by all concerned. More than all the humbug of a British law court has been transferred to Indian soil, and over everything connected with law an atmosphere of make-believe hangs which makes the Indians who have to do with it act as if they were playing a part in a dramatic entertainment. Principals and witnesses are carefully schooled by their legal mentors in what they are to say and leave unsaid, and apart from lapses of memory and unintentional contradictions the magistrate can generally count on hearing a story from both parties which is 99 per cent. fiction. This is what is called the "puka bāt." "Puka" is the same word etymologically as our word "cooked," and "bat" means "story." Evidence is given in open court, and witnesses are consequently subject to terrorism and intimidation on the part of the rich and powerful. The law admits of many devices for postponement and evasion, and in some cases where the former has been obtained a witness whose evidence was likely to prove inconvenient has disappeared mysteriously before the case came up for trial again.

With reference to some matters a more primitive procedure still survives which is sometimes taken advantage of by the S.D.O. Instead of trying the case in court he goes out to the villages from which the litigants come, gets hold of an inhabitant here and there who is likely to be a useful witness, and, before the latter has quite realised his position, puts him on oath and demands to know his version of the facts. In such cases the witness has not time to invent a story, and what is called the "Kucha Bāt," or "raw story," will probably be obtained. The procedure is a most useful one, and helps to prevent the rich from using the law courts as a means of oppressing the poor, but unfortunately it is going out of fashion.

### **Apropos of Judicial Procedure and the Law of Evidence.**

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The ideal of those who seek to separate judicial from executive functions is that the judge should be influenced solely by what comes before him in court in due form of law. The knowledge of the country and its people, their social and economic relations, and their local factions, which is only to be obtained by the touring that executive work involves, is altogether at a discount from this point of view. If carried to its logical conclusion, the best judge would be a barrister

straight out from home who knew less than nothing about the country and its people, and thus would only be influenced by the evidence put before him in court. To my mind, the administration of anything that bears a remote resemblance to justice in criminal matters would be absolutely impossible unless magistrates had executive functions as well, and judges had had large executive experience. Under the present system, before a man settles down in a purely judicial capacity he has held many position in which executive and judicial functions have been combined. The training which he has thus obtained is invaluable, and no amount of legal knowledge or purely judicial experience could compensate for its absence. In the same way, many a man who has finally settled down as a Collector-Magistrate has obtained valuable experience from the "acting" judicial appointments he must have held from time to time.

In addition to the utterly unreliable character of witnesses generally, the law of evidence in India is absurdly technical. It is, of course, modelled on the English law of evidence, whose chief *raison d'être* is the existence of the system of trial by jury and the necessity of preventing the use of evidence which might have undue weight with an untrained mind. Criminal law in India admits of jurors, or rather assessors, in a few cases, but the final responsibility on the question, both of law and fact, rests with the judge. Under these circumstances, the relative value of different kinds of evidence might well have been left to the judge. It is hard to see why magistrates, who have not usually jurors at all, should be troubled by the niceties of such a law.

Japan is a country which is sometimes held up by Indians as an example of what an Eastern country can do; in my opinion it is a progressive and enterprising country which might well be imitated in some particulars by at least one country in the West. The Japanese law of evidence might be adopted in India to the great advantage of the Indian people, though it would probably raise a great commotion amongst those classes which are most enthusiastic in their admiration for Japan.

Article 90 of the Japanese Code of Criminal Procedure contains the gist of their whole law of evidence, and runs as follows:—"The confession of the accused, official protocol of evidence taken, objects of evidence (*pièces d'évidence*), the testimony of witnesses and experts, and other sundry proofs, of whatsoever nature, are left to the discretion of the Judge." I remember sitting beside a District Magistrate in India who had to listen for about two hours to a hair-splitting dispute as to whether a statement made by an accused person to a policeman was an admission of a fact or a confession of criminality. There was a general agreement that the fact in



question was criminal, but if the Court could be induced to view the matter in the former light the "admission" might be used as evidence, whereas if the latter view was taken the "confession" was jealously excluded from its purview.

The law of evidence seems to have been devised with the object of making it easier for a camel to pass through the needle's eye than for a criminal to be brought to justice. The Japanese are content to provide that no fact should be overlooked which might help to elucidate the truth, and that ought to be a sufficient guarantee in the interests of the subject. For these and other reasons, the standard of proof demanded by the courts in India is impossibly high in the circumstances of the country. Mofussil courts, where the judges or magistrates are more familiar with these actual conditions, are usually content with a relatively low standard of proof. Two-thirds of the *personnel* of the High Court has never been in intimate touch with mofussil life, and when cases come to them on appeal they can usually be trusted to take a strictly legal and technical, as opposed to a common-sense, view of the matter; the standard of proof which they demand is, from the legal point of view, distinctly higher, and the result is that such appeals lead to an unduly large proportion of acquittals. For some unknown reason, if a case is appealed to the High Court, the judgment of the lower court may be set aside or confirmed, but in no case can the penalty be enhanced. If the latter was a possible consequence of appeal, it would tend to discourage its frequency, not that the High Court, as at present constituted, is likely to avail itself much of that power.

The difficulties placed in the way of the administration of justice by a purblind legalism and its auxiliaries, the lawyers, have led to an increase of crime, or at any rate a diminution of convictions. Monsieur Chailley on page 440 of his book calls attention to this alarming feature of our Indian administration in the following paragraph:—

"It would seem, indeed, from statistics, that the increase of crime has been much more rapid than its repression. Between 1867 and 1900 the population of the Punjab had certainly not doubled, but murders had increased from 243 in the former year to 690 in the latter; the proportion of convictions in prosecuted cases had fallen from 54 to 40 per cent., while, taking all offences together, the percentage of convictions had sunk from 55 to 24. Cases of breaches of trust, which were seventeen times more numerous in 1900 than in 1867, had only brought about seven times the number of prosecutions and twice the number of convictions. Cases of cheating, again, had increased ninefold, but the number of prosecutions had only risen by 53, and the number of convictions by 18 per cent. Taking all offences together, the

total number reported in 1867 was 49,000, while in 1900 it had reached 180,000. It is only fair, however, to mention that during this period fresh law had created fresh offences."

### Cases in Point.

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When I was in India a sub-inspector of police was shot in Cornwallis Square, Calcutta. The crime aroused considerable public interest, but the efforts of the authorities to discover and punish the perpetrator proved unavailing. About eight months afterwards I received a cutting from an Anglo-Indian newspaper which gave an interesting account of the sequel to this and other crimes, and incidentally cast a lurid light on the futile character of the ordinary machinery of criminal justice in India. I make no apology for quoting the story of the episode in full:—

"The following is an authoritative report of the recent important incident near Balasore. Acting on information that certain absconders were living in a retreat near Balasore, Messrs. Tegart, Denham, and Bird left Calcutta on Saturday, September 4th, and made three arrests in Balasore early on the following day. From enquiries at Balasore they ascertained that the retreat was situated at Kaptipoda in Nilgherry Estate, bordering on Balasore. Enquiries were made, but the party at Kaptipoda got information and disappeared in the jungle. A pursuit was made into the Mayurbhunj State, where the fugitives were lost sight of. Steps were taken to guard the exits of these States, and on the 9th parties of villagers guarding the exits from the Nilgherry State on the Balasore side saw a party of five Bengalis, who, on perceiving they were discovered, fired into the air. This led the villagers to believe only blank cartridges were being used, so they attacked. The Bengalis fired again, one villager being killed and three wounded. Information was at once sent to Balasore, eight miles distant, that the Bengalis had been discovered while probably making for Rupsa station on the railway line. Meanwhile, villagers and a police sub-inspector followed the Bengalis, who entrenched themselves in a zareba surrounded by open country on all sides. The District Magistrate started at once with armed police, accompanied by Sergeant Rutherford, of the gun-testing establishment at Balasore. As the party arrived in sight of the ambush they were met by revolver shots. A fusillade was exchanged between the parties, lasting 1½ hours. Two Bengalis then emerged from the zareba holding up their hands and said they surrendered. On this the District Magistrate advanced, and when he came quite close two further shots were fired, which missed him. A subsequent search

showed one man dead in the enclosure. He was found to be Chitta Priya Roy Choudhury, wanted for the murder of Sub-Inspector Suresh Mookerjee on February 28th last in Cornwallis Square. One man found shot in the stomach was Jotindra Nath Mookerjee, a desperado wanted for the Pathuriaghata murder of February 24th. The third man, less desperately wounded, was Joytish Pal, of Koksha, Nadia district, who worked under Jotin as contractor in Jessore district. The two men who surrendered were uninjured. They were Monoranjan Sen and Nirendra Das Gupta, both of Faridpur district, and associates of Chitta Priya in the Madaripur conspiracy case. Both are believed by the police to be concerned with Chitta Priya in the murder of Sub-Inspector Suresh Mookerjee. Jotin and his associates were taken to Balasore, where Jotin died the following afternoon. Joytish Pal is seriously injured, but is likely to recover.

"In the zareba there were found two Mauser revolvers, one automatic Mauser revolver, and one hundred rounds of unused ammunition, being part of those stolen from Messrs. Rodda and Co. Over eighty rounds of Mauser ammunition had been expended during the fight.

"Jotindra Nath Mookerjee, it may be remembered, was reported to have taken up his residence, along with some other young Bengalis of the *Bhadralogue* class, shortly after the commission of the Garden Reach Dacoity at No. 73, Pathuriaghata Street. On February 24th last, Nerode Prosad Haldar, a tailor of Chandney Bazar, was passing along this thoroughfare in search of his *goomasta* when he was directed by a passer-by to try No. 73. He did so, and on going upstairs recognised Jotindra, and as quick as lightning he was shot through the throat with a revolver. The man's dying declaration was recorded by the magistrate of Jorabagan, and the description which he gave of his assailant is said to have corresponded with the Bengali who led a gang of dacoits a few days previously, and looted the shops of Lalit Mohon in Canal East Road and shot dead the chauffeur of the taxi-cab No. A/34. Jotindra Nath was at one time a shorthand writer on Rs. 250 a month under Mr. Wheeler, I.C.S., who was some few years ago Financial Secretary to the Government of Bengal. He was prosecuted in what was known as the Howrah gang case, but was acquitted by the Session Court. Chitta Priya Roy, just four days after the occurrence above referred to, is alleged to have shot dead Sub-Inspector Suresh Chunder Mookerjee at Cornwallis Square, and also seriously wounded the deceased officer's orderly."

A District officer of large administrative experience sent me this newspaper cutting, and pointed the moral, as follows:—"The great difficulty in this country is that the

law is so technical that a case, however obvious, can be prolonged indefinitely. I send you a newspaper cutting about a little skirmish in the Balasore district, about a hundred and forty miles south-west of Calcutta. Practically all the revolutionaries who took part in it had been suspected or tried in previous cases, but had got off owing to the technicality of the law. These are the people the denial of justice to whom is such a grievance with a certain class of British writer, while, as a matter of fact, there is no country in the world, except perhaps the United States, in which they could get so much rope or it would be so hard to lay them by the heels." It is unnecessary for me to add any further comment.

When I was in India I was hardly ever in any one place for more than a fortnight at a time. I occasionally saw portions of cases at different stages, but as those of any interest or importance usually drag on for months, if not for years, it was very difficult to follow any one through from beginning to end. However, I was fortunate in seeing the beginning and being kept posted up in further developments of a very interesting case from its trial by a District Magistrate till it was disposed of by the High Court. It will serve to illustrate certain marked characteristics of the administration of criminal law in India, some of which I have already referred to.

A member of the Arya Samaj in a certain village in Bihar had written and published a pamphlet in which he urged his fellow-Hindus not to take part in Mahommedan festivals on various grounds—religious and historical. In the course of it Mahommedans were referred to as "beef-eating people devoid of 'achar'" (established rules of conduct). They were lumped together with the "untouchable" classes as unclean to the orthodox Hindu. Their past misdeeds were recalled and in particular the fact that they had destroyed thousands of Hindu temples, images of gods and goddesses, and had used libraries of the sacred books of Hinduism as fuel for heating "hamams" ("Turkish baths," conveying a suggestion of lasciviousness). The fact that they had slaughtered, and still continued to slaughter, crores of cows, was referred to, and other allegations of this character were made, which, whether true or not, were calculated to annoy Mahommedans and inflame Hindu feeling against them. The whole pamphlet could have been easily paralleled in the fulminations which appear from time to time in the party Press of Ireland, where history is ransacked and perverted in order to provide fuel for the fires of religious bigotry. Unfortunately, no law exists against that kind of thing in Ireland, and if it did it would not be honestly administered—but in India the case is different.

The local Mahommedans called the attention of the District Magistrate to the pamphlet. He read it with interest and some amusement, but could not bring himself to take it too seriously. However, the Local Government when appealed to took a more grave view of the case, and ordered a prosecution under Section 108 (b) of the Code of Criminal Procedure. This is a "preventive" section which refers, among other things, to Section 153 A of the Indian Penal Code. The relation between the two can be best shown by quoting from the sections themselves. Section 153 A I.P.C. runs as follows:—"Whoever, by words, either spoken or written, or by signs, or by visible representations, or otherwise, promotes or attempts to promote feelings of enmity or hatred between different classes of Her Majesty's subjects shall be punished with imprisonment, which may extend to two years, or with fine or with both." I append those portions of Section 108 C.C.P. which refer to this section of the I.P.C.:—

"Whenever a — District Magistrate, — has information that there is, within the limits of his jurisdiction, any person who, within or without such limits, either orally or in writing, disseminates, or attempts to disseminate, or in any wise abets the dissemination of—

"(a) —

"(b) Any matter the publication of which is punishable under Section 153 A of the Indian Penal Code,

such Magistrate may — require such person to show cause why he should not be ordered to execute a bond, with or without sureties, for his good behaviour for such period, not exceeding one year, as the Magistrate may think fit to fix."

It should be noted that this is one of those cases the trial of which is specially reserved for a District Magistrate or similar official.

The police, on investigation, found the manuscript of the pamphlet in the house of one Sital Prasad, who admitted to them that he wrote it. He was forthwith accused of the above offence and brought before the District Magistrate to stand his trial under Section 108 (b) C.C.P. The prosecution endeavoured to use the admission of authorship to the police as evidence, but the Court ruled it out on the ground that it was too closely akin to a confession, and thus contrary to the spirit of the law of evidence in India, the nature of which I have indicated above. The question of authorship and publication was not seriously disputed by the defence, and one would think that in the circumstances the only remaining question, i.e., whether it was an infringement of Section 153 A, could have been decided by a leisurely perusal of the pamphlet itself, occupying perhaps ten minutes. If

there was any need to call witnesses on this point, it would only be in order to ascertain the extent to which it had had the consequences which the law existed to prevent, so that the magistrate might be guided as to the amount of punishment he should inflict.

However, the ends of justice are not so easily achieved in India, as the following remarks of the District Magistrate in question will indicate:—

“The case of which you saw the beginning in April lasted till early in July. The hearing occupied me about two hours a day for thirty days, the evidence recorded in my own fair hand ran to one hundred and forty-nine foolscap pages, and the judgment to twenty-one more. This only represents a mere fraction of the labour involved, as the leaflet was written in a jumble of Hindi, Urdu, and Sanskrit, so that hardly any witness understood the meaning of every word in it, and accordingly each witness was cross-examined at great length in regard to the meanings, and even in regard to the etymology, of those words he did not understand, and then it was attempted to be made out that he had no idea of the general meaning of the whole thing. This necessitated references to various dictionaries, Sanskrit as well as Hindustani, gave rise to numerous arguments, and generally occupied a lot of time for which there was nothing to show on paper. In the end the man gave the security like a shot, and only went to jail for one night, and even that he would have escaped if the order had not been passed so late in the evening that there was no time on that day to examine the security given. For this there was a great outcry against me in the newspapers, and the poor man was represented as having been most brutally treated, whereas if the Government had taken the trouble to sanction his prosecution under the substantive section, he would have gone to jail for at least three months, and probably six. All my ordinary work which could stand over had been thrown into arrears by the time I had to devote to this case, and I do not expect to have caught things up again before November or December. In all probability the excessive tenderness which the law has displayed to the liberty of this man has caused the loss of a few lives elsewhere, as there have been very heavy floods in the northern part of the district, lots of people have had their houses washed away from under them—the first stage when a flood comes is to sit on the roof—and they are now camped without shelter along the railway embankments, raised roads, or any places which are not under water. I have sent out a couple of European Deputy Collectors with money to relieve their urgent necessities, but I really ought to have gone out myself, only I am so overwhelmed with work that I simply could not take the time. If I had done so,

the time would have been much better spent than what was occupied by trying this case when things had been arranged so that no punishment could be inflicted at the end of it."

However, even after all this the wheels of justice had only just begun to go round, so to speak. An application was made to the High Court of Calcutta that the order passed by the District Magistrate should be set aside, chiefly on the ground that the magistrate had made no attempt to discover the intention of the petitioner, which was said to be a necessary element in the offence. It was further argued that the witnesses only said the pamphlet was likely to create "anger and grief," but that was quite different from "hatred and enmity" (the words used in the Section). It will be noted that the Section in question says nothing whatever about the "intention," but the learned judges do not seem to have troubled about that, for they issued a rule calling on the magistrate "to show cause why the order complained of should not be set aside, on the ground that upon the true construction and interpretation of the leaflet as a whole the Court below ought to have held that it does not contain any matter the dissemination of which is punishable under Section 153 A of the Indian Penal Code, *which necessitates there being an intention to promote feelings of enmity and hatred by the publication of the pamphlet.*

I dare say the magistrate in his reply called attention to the close psychological affinity that exists between "anger" and "hatred," in spite of the quibbling effort of a learned lawyer to emphasise too much the distinction between them. In any attempts he may have made to argue the question of "intention," he had in his favour the complete absence of any reference to intention in the wording of the Section, though it was open to the Legislature to insert some such word as "intentionally," as had frequently been done in other sections, if it had wished to make intention an essential element in the offence. There was also the obvious consideration that if it was necessary to prove intention the law would practically be a dead letter. No one but a fool would deliberately stir up hatred and enmity between different classes with that object alone in view. On the other hand, a would-be reformer with the most virtuous and high-minded intentions might choose a method of propaganda which incidentally would have this result. It was surely with a view to preventing the use of this kind of means to an end, however worthy, that the Section was worded as it was.

In any case, the "rule" came up for final consideration by the High Court, and, after a lot of legal argument "about it and about," the order of the District Magistrate was upheld and the "rule" discharged. However, they could not let the occasion pass without issuing a "ruling" with the

avowed object of interpreting the law, but with the actual consequence of driving a coach and four through it.

In issuing their "rule" in reply to the application to have the order of the District Magistrate set aside, as shown above, they quite gratuitously committed themselves to the view that Section 153 A of the Indian Penal Code "necessitates there being an *intention* to promote feelings of enmity and hatred." Probably, after a fuller consideration of the case, they realised the absurdity of this position, but it was too late to retreat, and apparently in order to save their face they embodied this view of the matter in a distinct ruling, *i.e.*, that in order to constitute an offence under Section 153 A of the Indian Penal Code intention is necessary. With regard to Section 108 (b) of the Code of Criminal Procedure, they ruled that intention is not a necessary element of an offence under this Section. If the reader will refresh his memory of these sections, as quoted above, he will see that Section 108 (b) of the Code of Criminal Procedure refers back to Section 153 A of the Indian Penal Code. A mere layman would imagine that what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander, and if a matter is not punishable under Section 153 A, it is not logically preventable under Section 108 (b). The learned judges, however, appear to have recoiled from the consequences of their own finding, and say, in effect, that while it cannot be punished, it may be prevented. It is apparently a case of attempting to combine some remnants of common sense with *amour propre*. Having said in the "rule" that intention was necessary, it would have been *infra dia* to admit their mistake, but they endeavoured to reduce the mischief of the decision to as small limits as possible by making a fantastic distinction between the scope of the two sections.

Another case of which I have since seen a newspaper report provides an even better illustration of the perverted ingenuity of the Calcutta High Court. A new Chief Justice had just come out who apparently is a person of some common sense, but in his attempt to deal with this case was absolutely befogged and bewildered by the decisions of previous judges. There is a certain section in the Code of Criminal Procedure under which a Court can take action against parties and witnesses for perjury and offences of that kind, in which event the case is to be sent for trial to the nearest magistrate of the first class. The one thing which the rulings will never take into account is that persons drafting a law are not quite certain to think of every possible case, and that unusual cases may get overlooked. This is what happened here. In Calcutta there are magistrates called Presidency Magistrates, who are not formally described as magistrates



of the first class, but, as a matter of fact, exercise the same powers and a few extra ones. Judging from the argument reported, the High Court in its wisdom has on former occasions decreed that a case of this kind cannot be sent to a Presidency Magistrate because he is not a magistrate of the first class, and cannot be sent to a magistrate of the first class because he is not the nearest magistrate, so apparently for anything occurring in Calcutta they have reduced this section of the law to a dead letter.

According to the barrister who made the application, if the Chief Justice sent the case to the nearest first-class magistrate, "the accused is sure to take the point that there is no first-class magistrate nearest to the High Court." This is law (as interpreted by the High Court), but it is not logic, and it is scarcely even the King's English. The Chief Justice attempted to get out of the difficulty by passing his order in the exact wording of the section, but he probably overlooked some of the possible difficulties to which this might have given rise. The nearest magistrate of the first class is at Alipur, but instead of there being only one of them, there are about six, whose courts are in different rooms of the same building, and it would depend a good deal on what the architects called the orientation of the High Court and of the Alipur Kacheris to decide which is the nearest. If an order of this kind had to be carried out to the letter, it might be necessary to require the Surveyor-General to make a detailed measurement.

When its interpretation leads to absurdities such as this, one is inclined to wonder whether, as far as India is concerned, there is such a thing as a science of law. To the plain man it seems simply a collection of arbitrary dicta. Symbolically, the so-called "science of law" might be described as a knowledge of all the similar cases in which two and two have been held by the right people to make five. Science implies prevision, but no one can foresee what view the High Court will ultimately take of any matter. In some parts of India astrologers are said to do a brisk trade in prognosticating its probable decision in suits in which their clients are interested. The annoying thing, however, is that these learned judges persist in regarding law as a science, and when they themselves have arrived at some absurd conclusion, behave to everybody who has not been able to anticipate "the way the cat would jump" as if he had committed a mortal sin. I have come across a case in which a District Magistrate took what the Privy Council ultimately held to be the correct view of the law, but in the meanwhile his decision did not find favour with the higher legal authorities in India, and he was subjected to a civil suit which was

decreed against him in the High Court, the damages and costs of which would have swallowed up the whole of the possible savings of about ten years.

It must not be imagined that the features I have described are peculiar to the administration of criminal justice in India. The position is just as bad, if not worse, in civil matters. The latter affects the social and economic life of the people more seriously. Some of the most difficult economic problems of to-day have been created by persistence in a mistaken land revenue policy, and accentuated by an inhuman and machine-like administration of civil law, productive of nothing but endless litigation and a crop of social parasites.

### **Agricultural Conditions and the Problem of Agricultural Credit.**

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The problem of agricultural indebtedness in India has attained gigantic proportions, and up till recently defied all attempts to solve it. In their efforts to provide a suitable system of administration for those portions of India which came from time to time under their rule, early Anglo-Indian statesmen and administrators built on the foundation of the institutions they found already existing, and contented themselves with trying to improve the tone of the public services and secure greater efficiency in their organisation. They did not always understand the true nature of the institutions they sought to adapt, were misled by supposed analogies with English conditions, and showed a tendency to modify the former in the direction of the latter, and apply the economic dogmas that were orthodox at that time in Great Britain to the vastly different circumstances of India.

The first problem that British rule in India was called upon to solve was the problem of its own livelihood. The traditional and chief source of revenue for the rulers of India has always been that derived from the land, and one of the first necessities of a stable financial policy was to devise some method for its regular assessment and collection. Under the Mogul emperors a fixed proportion of the actual produce of the soil was payable through a series of intermediaries to the Imperial Treasury. The State did not deal directly with the individual cultivator; where the latter were organised in the prehistoric village community, its collective contribution was paid through its headman to the Imperial official. Needless to say, the amount that finally reached the Treasury bore no comparison with the amount collected from the "rai-yats" (cultivators). Each official intermediary got what the Chinaman calls a "squeeze,"

and the amount thus subtracted varied with the rapacity of the individual and the strictness of the supervision from above. The system, however, had a flexibility about it which appealed to the Eastern mind, and was not unsuited to the social and economic circumstances of India. Under weak or vicious rulers and in times of social disorder everything was swept from the land, and the cultivator only retained a miserable subsistence allowance, but when an Akbar was on the throne, or a local officer was not altogether greedy and corrupt, the proportion of the cultivator's produce which nominally fell to the Crown was an ideal only realised in prosperous years. The amount actually collected rose and fell with the fortunes of the cultivator, and in famine years might disappear altogether. The Crown thus shared alike the prosperity and the adversity of its subjects. This invaluable feature of the native system at its best was not grasped by early British administrators, and instead the cultivator was compelled to pay a fixed sum from year to year, which on the average was probably less than the amount formerly exacted, but which made no adequate allowance for his dependence on climate and other uncertain economic factors, and for an individual temperament in which Western ideas of economy and thrift are conspicuous by their absence.

Where the Mogul emperors found Rajahs and Nawabs with hereditary rights in the land, they recognised them, and collected from them the revenue, which the latter exacted in their turn, with additions, from their agricultural dependents. In Bengal, where neither village communities nor hereditary landowning classes existed in sufficient numbers, the State found it convenient to farm out the taxes to a class of tax-farmers, who were supposed to obtain a 10 per cent. commission on the revenue they collected. The latter called themselves "Zamindars," did their best to make their position hereditary—an easy process in India—paid as little to the State as they could, and endeavoured to bring their dependents into the most complete social and economic subjection.

Bengal was one of the first portions of India to fall under British rule. In its attempts to collect land revenue the existing tax-farmers were recognised, and Government fixed from time to time the amount payable by them in respect of this tax. It was found difficult to get in the money, elaborate investigations were undertaken, and the theory was propounded that these self-styled "Zamindars" were embryo British country squires, and might be expected to develop the supposed virtues of that class if they were given some of their social privileges. By the famous "Permanent Settlement of Bengal" in 1793 the dues payable by them to Government were fixed in perpetuity. No adequate

measures were taken for the protection of their tenants, and the chief result of that "settlement" has been that the tremendous increase in the agricultural wealth of Bengal that has taken place since that date has found its way automatically into the pockets of a gratuitously created class of landlords by the simple process of enhancement of rent. When the settlement took place Government was supposed to obtain 90 per cent. and the zamindar 10 per cent. of the amount paid by the tenant. At present Bengal zamindars have to pay one-sixteenth of their rent receipts for "road cess"; to such an extent have their rents increased since 1793 that their contribution to road cess is often equivalent to the fixed amount they still pay as land revenue. The worst features of Irish landlordism were equalled, if not excelled, in the relations of the Bengali zamindar to his tenants. Government had to interfere in the interests of the latter, and a series of Acts, known collectively as the "Bengal Tenancy Acts," were passed, in which the relations between the landlord and tenant were placed on a strictly legal basis. Among other matters, the circumstances in which alone rent might be raised were very definitely laid down.

These Acts are similar in character to those which in Ireland turned the tenant-at-will into the free man, with the right of "Fair Rent, Free Sale, and Fixity of Tenure." In Ireland they were the Government's long delayed answer to the only form of argument that British government in Ireland invariably understands—the argument of social disorder rising to the dimensions of civil war, with its usual accompaniment of outrage and assassination.

The only branch of Irish government which is highly organised and which no expense is spared to keep in a state of efficiency is the repressive branch. In times of social peace every Irishman, in the words of a late Chief Secretary, lives under the microscope of Dublin Castle, and more immediately under the prying eyes of the local police sergeant. Thus we cannot complain that we are out of touch with our rulers and governors, and in times of social disturbance there is a close and intimate relationship between the policeman's baton\* and the head of the riotous Irishman. All this is designed to repress, and actually succeeds in accentuating, the symptoms of social and political disorder.

In the case of the land question, after generations had been spent in this futile and demoralising tug-of-war, the Government finally conceded to the exponents of "direct action" what would have been asked for in vain through the channels of constitutional agitation.

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\* Nowadays the Police in Dublin do not carry batons; they carry revolvers instead.—April, 1920.

In Bengal, however, the reform of the land system seems to have come about as a concession to enlightened justice, as a result mainly of representations made by District Officers, who realised the futility as well as the wickedness of a policy of force and sympathised with the grievances of the tenants.

The tenant, however, was saved from the landlord only to fall into the clutches of the moneylender. The very definiteness of an occupancy right guaranteed by law, and making eviction a possible consequence of insolvency, would cause him to be a more attractive prey to a ruthless moneylender working in co-operation with the minions of the law. The same social and historical circumstances discouraged the development of thrift in the Bengali cultivator as in those of other portions of India. The climate is less uncertain and the soil more productive, but, nevertheless, indebtedness was and is a great evil in Bengal and those portions of neighbouring provinces which the Permanent Settlement has affected.

The existence of the latter, however, has reacted unfavourably on the rest of India, since Government has, of its own accord, debarred itself from obtaining an increasing share in the agricultural wealth of its richest province, and has had to exact a larger amount than would otherwise have been necessary from that of the other provinces.

It is not necessary to describe in detail the different land tenures with which the Government had to deal in attempting to levy land revenue from other portions of India as they came, from time to time, under its control. It is sufficient to say that, apart from Bengal, the general principle adopted was one of temporary settlement with one or other of the different agricultural classes. The amount of land revenue payable was assessed at a fixed amount per annum, subject to revision every ten years or so. The revision was generally in an upward direction, and there is reason to believe that it has amounted at times to a tax of 60 per cent. on the net receipts of the cultivator from the soil. An income tax of these dimensions would soon find most of us in the hands of the "receiver," but an even greater evil than the excessive amount was the lack of elasticity in the method of collection, to which I have already called attention.

In making these assessments Government officers came in contact with Indian village-communities of different types, whose internal economy they did not understand, with the result that they were again misled by false Western analogies, and destroyed the most essential and valuable features of this type of social organisation without knowing that they were destroying anything, and under the impression that they were conferring a boon on the inhabitants. It will be sufficient to describe one type of village community—the

*raiyat wari* village of Madras and Bombay. The arable land of the village was divided up for purposes of cultivation among its different members, but the villagers had a common right to the village pasture and to wood from the jungle. Their headman represented their collective interests in their dealings with the outside world, and probably had chief responsibility for the efficient management of its internal affairs. The individual villager was not inclined to practise thrift, since in the disturbed social conditions of the period before British rule, to be suspected of having money was to invite robbery.

The productivity of the soil varied with the eccentricities of the monsoon. The village was largely cut off from the outside world owing to lack of communications, wealth was chiefly in kind, or in gold and silver ornaments, and there was no inducement to create more than the immediate necessities of the present required. The villager revelled in plenty in prosperous years and took his chance in times of famine. In addition, ceremonies of various kinds, sanctioned by social and religious tradition, made occasional and sometimes heavy demands on the resources of the cultivator. Sons and daughters *had* to be married almost before they reached their teens, and though these expenses might have been foreseen and provided for, the same was not equally true about funerals, and the feasting of relations required by religious usage on such occasions.

It is hard to see how a society composed of thriftless individuals could hold together at all in circumstances such as these, but the thrift which was lacking in the individual was provided for in the organisation of the village. It was incarnate in the person of the village "bania." The latter term has now an evil odour, and may be translated "gombeen man," but before the disintegrating effects of British administration were felt he was the servant rather than the master of his fellow-villagers. The villagers kept what we might call a current account with him, perhaps in terms of money, perhaps in terms of grain. After the harvest the cultivator turned over to the bania whatever portion of its yield he did not immediately require. From time to time during the year the cultivator drew on the bania for his requirements of different kinds, and the balance might incline now to this side, now to that. The cultivator probably had no seed corn at seed time. The bania advanced the amount required as a matter of course, and at harvest time the same quantity was returned, with a little more besides by way of interest. In times of stress the bania literally kept the cultivating classes alive.

This is perhaps a somewhat idealised, but nevertheless a substantially true, picture of the internal economy of a

typical Indian village community. The effect of British law and administrative methods on its framework was nothing short of revolutionary. In making the periodic assessments for land revenue, in Madras and Bombay, at any rate, the Government systematically ignored the collective aspect of village life and entered into relations with the individual villagers. In the cadastral survey that was undertaken, the peasant whose family had habitually cultivated a certain portion of village land was recognised as the absolute proprietor of that land, with full power of alienation if he so desired. The latter had never been enjoyed in the absolute sense under the Mahomedan *régime*, and village custom only allowed transfers of ownership in certain special cases. It was thought that a great boon was being conferred on the raiyat by turning him into a peasant proprietor, but the only consequence of enabling the latter to pledge his land as well as his harvest was that he took to living on his capital rather than his income.

Railways and roads were everywhere opened up. Prices rose, and with them the value of agricultural land. The old economic isolation was destroyed, and the market of the world came into existence. The bania now became a middleman with all the "profiteering" instincts of that class. The need for agricultural credit was still as great as before, but new laws on the subject of contracts made the relation between the moneylender and his client a strictly legal one, which involved the taking of legal "precautions." At the same time a regular system of civil procedure was set up, which enabled the moneylender rapidly to realise his dues, and a firm administration of criminal law preserved him from the righteous fate that would otherwise have awaited him when he embarked on the career of a social pirate.

The village community was thus destroyed, and a *régime* of economic individualism was entrenched behind a barrier of law. Bereft of the protection of his fellow-villagers, who were powerless, because disorganised, and confronted by the absolute necessity for obtaining a loan at all costs, the individual villager, with his bovine intelligence in matters of finance, was left to extract what terms he could from the stony heart of a moneylender who had nothing to learn from the "wizards" of finance of the West. In the sacred name of the freedom of contract the State refused to interfere with the ordinary laws of supply and demand, but stood by, a Cyclopean monster, "hideous, unshapely, huge, deprived of sight," to see that a contract entered into under these circumstances was carried out to the letter, and the whole resources of the legal machinery it had set up were available for that purpose. Latterly Government has been realising more and more the tragic error it has thus committed, and when I

was in India a law to prevent the *civil courts from being used as an instrument for the extortion of the usurious demands of moneylenders* was in contemplation.\*

During the 19th century two new classes were rising in social importance—traders and lawyers. The former profited by a growing trade, internal and foreign; the latter were the inevitable outcome of the extension to India of the expensive absurdities of British law and legal procedure. Internal industrial enterprise was little developed, and these new classes sought to employ their capital in the purchase of land. They were also attracted by the social prestige which landowners enjoy in India as elsewhere. Hitherto the moneylenders had not troubled about the additional hold on their clients which the right to alienate their land might give. They were content with their share of the harvest. When they realised that a great, if somewhat artificial, demand for land had been created, an unholy alliance, which has since endured, was created between them and "land grabbers" of this type.

The ancient nobility was just as improvident and as much given to incurring loans at usurious rates of interest as other classes of the agricultural community. As a consequence they have been rapidly disappearing. In one district that I know, the three richest landlords have made their money in three generations by moneylending, while the members of the old landed aristocracy have sunk into poverty and comparative insignificance. One of the former has been generous in his gifts to the Municipality, and a grateful Government has bestowed on him titles and distinctions, while those of his admiring fellow-citizens who have votes have elected him to membership of the Legislative Council. I know of nothing against this man personally as a landlord, but *parvenu* landlords of this class are only too often mere rackrenters, and there are no ties of social sympathy or hereditary association to soften the asperities of their relationship to their tenants.

Government regards the disappearance of the old nobility with deep misgiving, and has latterly attempted to tackle this problem.

Most provinces have a Court of Wards Act, the object of which is to provide for the proper administration of estates which are encumbered or whose owners are unable, by reason of age, sex, or personal incapacity, efficiently to manage them. The result usually is that debts are cleared off and the estate handed back to its owner on a thoroughly sound financial

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\* The Civil Courts are now allowed by law to use their discretion as regards the amount of a claim for repayment of a loan that they will enforce. I have no information about the working of this law.—April, 1920.



basis. However, if it is possible to have a legal dispute about the question of ownership, the good intentions of this Act are liable to be frustrated.

Thus improvidence and ignorance of modern business methods are not confined to any one of the classes hereditarily associated with the land in India.

But the cultivator, in particular, is astonishingly simple in his business ideas, and is just as ready to mortgage his farm as to pledge his harvest. He borrowed at incredible rates of compound interest—75 per cent. was and is quite common—on the security of anything the moneylender chose to demand. When the debt had been contracted the procedure was quite simple. The moneylender let him alone for a year or two, until the original amount of the loan had swollen beyond all recognition, then presented his demands, which the victim could never hope to repay in full, but for a few years every farthing he possessed beyond the barest subsistence allowance found its way into the moneylender's pocket, until the former was reduced to the position of a "sucked orange," when, after he had paid several times over the amount he had originally borrowed, a suit against him for debt was filed, a decree was given almost automatically, the land was sold, and our erst-while raiyat drifted into the ranks of the landless labourers.

If the process of ruin was not sufficiently rapid at the ordinary rate of increase by compound interest, the moneylender was an expert at book-keeping, and the figures he showed were always satisfactory—to himself. In a country where forgery is almost a national industry the civil courts attach a ridiculous importance to documentary evidence of every kind. In 1827 the written bond was not considered sufficient justification for granting a decree in full, but by 1852 Anglo-Indian had been "levelled up" to the standard of British law in this matter, and equitable considerations were at a discount.

In addition to the expenses of litigation, as a result of which "justice" was, and is, a luxury the rich can always count on obtaining, since only the rich can afford it, the forms of civil procedure were cumbrous to a degree and absolutely unintelligible to the average Indian, while the very language of the courts, even if it was a vernacular, might very well not be a vernacular understood by both the litigants.

The *personnel* of the civil courts was hopelessly overworked, since, among other causes, the break-up of the village community and the establishment of an individualist economy had led to a growth of local factions, which gave rise to a constant and ever-increasing volume of litigation. The latter in its turn produced a crop of social parasites connected in various ways with law. Indeed, the manufacture of lawyers

is one of the most flourishing industries in India, and the latter country is the most lawyer-ridden with which I am acquainted.

Munsiffs, subordinate judges and the rest, in the circumstances of the case, had to perform their duties like machines, and it is much easier, and takes less time, to administer law than justice. In any case, they belong to the same social class as the moneylenders themselves, and would probably not have the inclination, even if they had the time, to take an equitable view of the law where moneylenders and their clients are concerned.

I said just now that the forms of civil procedure were cumbrous, but the moneylenders sometimes find them simplicity itself, and the following little anecdote will illustrate the facility with which *ex parte* decrees can be obtained:—Two members of a co-operative society in Bihar were carrying on a legal quarrel with their zamindar, who was also a moneylender, though they personally owed him nothing. They were winning case after case against him, but the tables were suddenly turned when the latter obtained an *ex parte* decree for Rs. 700 against them from an overworked Munsiff. The other two knew nothing until they were confronted with the accomplished fact. Presumably the zamindar had forged\* a bond in their names for the necessary amount. He had brought the matter into court and a summons had been issued on the defendants. A little money judiciously distributed prevented the summons from reaching them, the trial came on, judgment was given by default, and an *ex parte* decree descended like a thunderbolt on the heads of its hapless victims. To obtain a review of judgment it was necessary for them to deposit Rs. 700 in court. As they were quite poor they could just as easily have deposited the moon. Meanwhile, the decree held good. Thus are the ends of justice secured in India.

One further example will illustrate the close connection that exists between the economic problem and a system of law which is unable to remedy the many cases of social injustice to which the economic evil gives rise.

A certain moneylender had a whole countryside in his clutches. His *modus operandi* was to lend at high interest, to continue receiving payments on account until the debtor's resources were exhausted, and then finally to sue and sell him up for the "balance." A Mahomedan of good position had borrowed about Rs. 250 from him, and had paid off at various times Rs. 1,200; when he represented to his creditor that he thought he had paid enough, he was told that he still owed Rs. 1,400, and if that sum were not immediately forthcoming a suit would be filed. The moneylender out-Shylocked Shylock, and could not be induced by any prayers

or entreaties to modify his demand. A public meeting of his debtors was forthwith held to consider the best way of dealing with him. They knew our legal system well enough to know that law would not help them much, so they discussed the matter in all its bearings, and finally came to the obvious and only sensible conclusion, that *the man must be killed*. They then called for tenders for the performance of this public service and one at Rs. 80 was accepted. A dispute arose as to whether the money should be paid before or after the deed, and the whole scheme was in danger of falling through when the son of the Mahommedan debtor referred to above volunteered to do it *for love*. The moneylender was wont to go to a certain hut to collect his dues, and he usually started home just before dark. One night soon afterwards he set out, but did not reach home, and portions of his body were found at intervals over a mile of the way the following morning. There was a confession, and one of the accused turned approver, but in the Sessions Court retracted his statement, so that the only person punished was the approver. The judge was not altogether sorry at the "murderer's" escape, as he felt that more substantial justice had been done in this way than the aggrieved persons would have been likely to obtain in the civil courts.

The evil economic consequences of unregulated indebtedness went on in an increasing degree during the whole of the 19th century. At its end it was calculated that two-fifths of the land-holders of India, great and small (improvidence is not confined to any one class in India), were indebted on the average to double the rent value of their lands. In different parts of India the economic evil came to a head at different times, and wholesale transfers of land from agriculturists to non-agriculturists have taken place. Government made various attempts to put a stop to it by legislation, but Acts like the Deccan Agriculturists' Relief Act of 1879, and the Punjab Land Alienation Act of 1900, dealt rather with symptoms than with fundamental causes.

The village community had perished, and its equitable system of agricultural credit was gone beyond recall. The village itself could no longer be a self-centred and self-sufficient economic unit, since the development of communications had opened up the market of the world.

Opportunities for profit were greater indeed, but this advantage was discounted by an added element of uncertainty and fluctuation, and accompanied by its natural corollary in opportunities for "profiteering," of which advantage is fully taken under present conditions.

The real problem was to restore an equitable system of agricultural credit, adapted to the economic circumstances of modern India.

The application of the co-operative remedy and the degree of success with which it has been attended will next occupy our attention.

### **Agricultural Indebtedness—The Co-operative Remedy.**

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In the last section I had occasion to refer rather severely to some aspects of British rule in India during the last century. I endeavoured to show how the problem of agricultural indebtedness has resulted to a large extent from the application of English economic ideas and legal principles to the very different conditions existing in India. What I shall have to say in this section will show British rule in a much more agreeable light. The Government of India is often the most candid and instructive critic of its own past errors. That is due to the fact that, having a continuous existence, it must take responsibility for its former actions, and has not the convenient device by which, under a system of party government, anything that has been foolishly done in the past can be ascribed to the lack of patriotism or statesmanship of the "opposite party." In fact, one might say that the Government of India is in a real sense a responsible Government, since it cannot shelve responsibility in this easy fashion. There is also in the Indian system an element of what one might call "scientific government"—an unheard-of conception in these islands.

The Government of India is concerned with political or other questions on their merits, and expert opinion has considerable influence in its counsels; party government is only concerned with political questions as they affect the fortunes of one or other party, and if expert advice is asked for, only so much of it will be taken as meets the convenience of the party in question. This account of the co-operative movement in India will illustrate these and other qualities of Anglo-Indian administration, and occasional references to the attitude of the State to co-operation in Ireland will provide materials for an instructive comparison, and opportunity for drawing a few morals which will probably stamp the present writer as a political heretic.

The first step towards the solution of the problem of agricultural indebtedness on co-operative lines was taken in 1892, when the Madras Government sent Mr. (now Sir Frederick) Nicholson on a roving commission to Europe to study similar questions there and make recommendations that might suit the circumstances of India. Incidentally, he paid a visit to Ireland, and was able to examine with profit the work of the recently founded Irish Agricultural Organisation Society.

He reported in 1897 and 1899, and after a few sporadic attempts at agricultural co-operation on Raiffeisen principles, the Government realised that special legislation was necessary, and not only that, but that the movement it was desired to start would require the fostering care of the State, in so far as it was possible for the State to help it on without prejudice to the true principles of co-operation.

The first Co-operative Credit Societies Act was passed in 1904, when Lord Curzon was Viceroy, and owed much to his energy and initiative. The memory of Lord Curzon is now execrated by what is called "articulate" India, and certainly he was guilty of some impolitic acts, which do not concern us here. However, I have no hesitation in saying that if the fabric of political freedom in India is ever securely erected, it will be built on the foundation of the co-operative organisation of society. In the words of Mr. Ewbank, writing in a recent number of the *Quarterly Review*:—"A movement which has begun with the democratisation of credit may end by democratising society and perhaps even the State itself." Mr. Ewbank, as an Indian Civilian, would not be expected on *à priori* grounds to indulge in dreams of the political future of India, but his words are all the more significant on that account.

After 1904, progress was for some time slow. The Act of that year only made provision for primary societies, and it was found that if the movement was to succeed in the geographical and other conditions of India, some kind of federation among these co-operative units was absolutely necessary. The experience thus gained was embodied in a new Act of 1912, which superseded the former Act and brought the law dealing with co-operation into line with the requirements of a growing movement. At home the Friendly Societies Act of 1896, *inter alia*, legitimatised the foundation of co-operative credit societies on Raiffeisen principles, but, having passed that Act, the British Parliament has gone asleep so far as the requirements of co-operative credit are concerned. The co-operative movement in Ireland has long outgrown the legislative provisions made for it, but our legislative assembly, like a very careless mother, allows a movement of over twenty years' growth still to wear the short clothes of babyhood. The nature of law is to stereotype, and unless the legislative organ is sensitive to the growing needs of a developing community, law, so far from being a guarantee of human freedom or the concrete embodiment of reform, becomes an obstacle of the most difficult kind in the path of human progress. The present writer has often wished that something of the flexibility of the Indian system could be transferred to the political and administrative machinery of this country. A close analysis of the reasons why this

difference exists will not be attempted at present; suffice it to say that India is not yet cursed with the institutions of representative democracy, and to repeat that its Government is, on the whole, concerned to solve real problems on their merits in the interests of the whole community, and not to satisfy the interests of this or that party according to the strength of the "political pull" it can exercise.

The Act of 1912 is an interesting example of Anglo-Indian legislation. It provides for the appointment of a Registrar of Co-operative Societies for each province by the Local Government in question. It lays down on what conditions co-operative societies of agriculturists or townsmen, with limited or unlimited liability, as the case may be, may be established. It describes the duties, and assigns a certain number of special privileges to such societies. Recognising the great diversity of conditions that exists in different parts of India, it empowers local governments to make special rules under the Act to meet the requirements of a province or any area within it. In addition, each society is allowed, within certain limits, to frame its own bye-laws, but model bye-laws are issued by the Registrar, and are usually adopted.

In the beginning the Registrar and his staff were propagandist and organising functionaries as well as administrative. By this time the movement has grown to such an extent that the former two activities have necessarily and willingly been conceded almost altogether to unofficial agencies, and the Registrar is chiefly concerned with the general supervision of the movement and the determination of co-operative policy in consultation with its official and unofficial promoters.

Perhaps the clearest view of the nature and functions of a co-operative agricultural credit society could be given if we describe the procedure adopted in bringing such a society into existence, ignoring for the time being all the machinery of central supervising and financing institutions to which primary societies are now normally affiliated.

An endeavour is usually made to secure the active and sympathetic interest of local gentlemen of light and leading in any society that may be started in their neighbourhood. The potential members are then got together, and the advisability of their forming a co-operative society is explained to them. It is desirable that they should belong to the same village or group of villages, and that the area within which they live should not be so large that they are not all intimately acquainted with one another. A co-operative credit society has been defined as "an association or combination of persons having mutual regard for, and knowledge of, one another, who jointly pledge their credit in order to raise sufficient funds on cheaper terms for the pur-

pose of lending out among themselves than each could obtain by pledging his individual credit." In the agricultural credit societies of India liability is unlimited—that is to say, all the members are jointly and severally liable up to the full extent of their assets for the debts of the society. This is the fundamental financial principle of such a society.

If a sufficient number, say twenty, are willing, it is an easy matter to adopt the model bye-laws supplied by the Registrar, with modifications if necessary, and obtain registration. A general meeting will next be held at which a Panchayat, or Committee of Management, and supervisors, whose duties will presently be explained, are elected. The society will next proceed to estimate its probable requirements for the coming year, and will have to take active steps to secure the money necessary for its activities. Each member will have paid a small entrance fee on admission, and also a trifling proportion on one or more shares of the nominal value of possibly Rs. 10 each. But this would go a very short way indeed towards meeting the financial needs of most societies. Possibly most of the members are in debt, though if any of them are involved beyond the total value of their assets, even membership of a co-operative society cannot save them. However, some people in the neighbourhood may be comparatively well off, and an effort is usually made to attract deposits from such, whether members or non-members. If these are inadequate, or not forthcoming at all, where co-operative institutions are undeveloped, the isolated society is usually dependent on private capital obtained by way of loan. An application is made to some local gentleman who is possessed at once of money, public spirit, and business instinct. The Government also occasionally lends money on very equitable terms to societies. A loan is usually negotiated without much difficulty, and this is not to be wondered at. Its security is really very good, for every member of a society may be sold up to the last stick he possesses in order to realise it if necessary. If a man has lent money to a society at 12 per cent., which the latter lends again among its members at 18 per cent., he may flatter himself that he has done a very good stroke of business, and at the same time may legitimately feel that he is a philanthropist by comparison with the "mahajan" or moneylender, who normally exacts 75 per cent.

The society is now in a position to begin active operations. Members will come to the Panches and ask for loans. The latter will say, "What for?" and, if satisfied that the purpose of the loan is necessary and good, they will grant, not necessarily the amount asked for, but the amount they consider sufficient for that purpose. The loan is given on personal security, and the borrower is usually required to

furnish, in addition, one or more sureties in proportion to its amount. Mortgages may, in exceptional circumstances, be accepted, but only as collateral security. Personal security is always preferred, and for quite adequate reasons. The sureties which he must produce will naturally satisfy themselves that the loan is necessary and the amount not excessive; they will further take a keen personal interest in seeing that it is applied to the purpose for which it is obtained. The supervisors exercise a similar function on behalf of the society.\* Their duty is to familiarise themselves with the circumstances of their fellow-members, and in particular to see that the money has been applied to the purpose for which it was lent. Since every member of the society is responsible for every other member's debts, their influence collectively and individually will tend to discourage extravagance and encourage thrift.

In issuing loans the Panchayat will at the same time make arrangements for the repayment of interest and principal. The periods at which such instalments are paid are called "kists." In fixing kists the Panchayat will take into consideration the purpose of the loan and the circumstances of the borrower; a loan for seed corn must be repaid in full at harvest time; repayment of a loan to buy bullocks or sink a well may be spread over a longer period. Money lent for a funeral or a wedding-feast—necessary objects of expenditure in the circumstances of Indian society—will usually be made repayable at the earliest possible moment if the society does not wish to encourage such unproductive expenditure. The corporate feeling of the society will encourage punctual repayment of interest and principal, for reasons already indicated, but much will depend on the energy and public spirit with which the Panchayat and supervisors perform their functions.

When a society has the true co-operative spirit the difference between borrowing from it and from a "mahajan" is very great. The latter will not care a straw for what purpose the loan is required; he will charge compound interest at an extortionate rate, and add it on every six months, if not oftener; if necessary, he will cook his accounts, and, so far from encouraging his victim to pay up while he can, he will give him rope enough to hang himself with. The Society, however, has no desire to ruin its member, but to help him. It will exercise a friendly pressure in its and his own interests to prevent the misuse, and to ensure the punctual repayment of loans. When he borrows for a ceremonial feast, the chances are that many of his fellow-members are also the caste fellows whom he has to entertain; under an

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\* See, however, Mr. H. W. Wolff on "Co-operation in India."



individualistic social economy, where the money comes from the "mahajan," the more extravagant the feast the better pleased they will be. But when they are jointly and severally responsible for the economic consequences of the expenditure involved, they look at the matter from a different point of view, and will probably represent to him that a comparatively small expenditure will be adequate. In this way the growth of co-operative societies tends to diminish the extravagance traditional on such occasions.

Societies lend money for various necessary purposes, but a large proportion of the loans issued by a society when it begins operations goes towards the liquidation of the pre-existing debts of its members. It is often found that the "mahajan," when confronted with hard cash, is willing to compound for a lesser sum than his books show, especially if an influential patron of the society takes charge of the negotiations. In a certain portion of Bengal the claims of 355 persons, amounting to Rs. 54,412, were fully settled for Rs. 34,657.

As agricultural societies sprang up here and there it was found desirable to combine them in centralising organisations. Isolated in the villages, they could only tap very limited financial resources, and any considerable development was impossible. It was difficult to make adequate arrangements for that regular and automatic supervision which can only be given locally, and for which in any case the Registrar and his staff were not the most suitable instruments. It was early recognised that the more intensive cultivation of the movement required the calling into existence of other agencies.

Even before this procedure was regularised by the law of 1912, within the limits of a suitable administrative area, usually a sub-division of a district, Central Banks were founded to focus the activities of the local primary societies. The Central Banks of Bengal belong to two main types, the "pure" and the "mixed." All the shareholders in banks of the "pure" type are co-operative societies in their corporate capacity. The character of banks of the "mixed" type is less satisfactory from the co-operative point of view, but they have certain practical advantages which have decided the authorities to encourage their development, other things being equal, in preference to those of the "pure" type. The functions of central banks are more complex, and require a greater amount of education and business experience for their efficient management than is usually to be met with in representatives of local societies. Consequently, in addition to agricultural societies in their corporate capacity, the members of a central bank of the "mixed" type include private shareholders, who sometimes get a certain preference in the matter

of dividends, but may not borrow from the society, and are expected to assist with their sympathy and skill in the management of its affairs.

The liability of these banks is limited to the nominal value of their share capital. The interest that a member, other than a registered society, may have in their shares, and the rate of dividend that may be paid, are also limited by the Act or by rules made under the Act. The object is to prevent the co-operative from being outweighed by the private element, and thus eliminate the danger of a dividend-hunting spirit arising to the prejudice of co-operative principles. These banks accept deposits from members and non-members, and, taking India as a whole, nearly three-fourths of their capital is derived from this source, while about one-sixth is obtained from loans. Their chief financial function is to finance local agricultural societies, and in Bengal most of their capital is devoted to that purpose. Conversely, the local societies are dependent to a similar extent on this source for the great bulk of their finances. Efforts are made, not altogether without success, to encourage local deposits in agricultural credit societies, but the dimensions of their business increase more rapidly than this source of capital, and for years to come they must look to the resources provided by central banking institutions for a large proportion of their financial requirements.

In addition to financing existing societies, central banks are expected to control their affiliated societies by careful and regular inspections,\* and to further their interests in every possible way. It was hoped, in the case of Bengal, that it would soon be possible to hand over the annual statutory audit of the primary societies to the agency of their respective central banks, but it has been decided on more mature consideration to postpone this action for the present, and meanwhile the audit of those societies, as of the central banks themselves, is conducted by the staff of the Registrar.

The inspecting staff of the central banks do a useful work in keeping the societies instructed in the principles of co-operation and in correct methods of business, but directors of central banks and other non-officials are encouraged in every way to keep in active and sympathetic touch with the movement. Another, and by no means unimportant, duty of central banks is to encourage the growth of co-operative societies within their area. They can be most useful as organising and propagandist agencies. At the beginning of the movement central banks had to wait for the creation of isolated societies, but once a nucleus of these enabled central banks to come into existence it was found easy to add to

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\* See, however, Mr. H. W. Wolff on "Co-operation in India."

the number of affiliated societies, and develop the movement both intensively and extensively. Latterly, so valuable were the functions of central banks found to be in this respect, they have been established even in areas where no subordinate societies existed, but where the conditions seemed hopeful for the immediate foundation of a number of such societies. As a result of this new policy the number of central banks in Bengal in 1913-14 rose from 17 to 33, and their working capital from nearly £100,000 to over £200,000.

Other forms of co-operation exist in Bengal and the rest of India. There are credit societies in the towns, usually of the limited liability type, whose object is to provide a cheap and safe source of credit for their members, who belong usually to the trading or petty official classes. One or two hand-loom weavers' societies exist, and it was intended to make arrangements for the wholesale purchase of yarn and the sale of the finished products, with the object of delivering them from the middlemen, who formerly fleeced them in both these matters. Very likely the co-operative principle has now been successfully applied here also, but I have not had access to the latest information on the subject. Co-operative stores and grain banks also exist in isolated instances. While encouraging these and other forms of co-operation in every possible way. Registrars and their staffs feel, however, that the gigantic problem of agricultural indebtedness must for the present claim the bulk of their attention.

Some idea of the present dimensions of the movement in India may be gained from the fact that in 1914 it included 14,566 societies (nearly all of which were agricultural credit societies), with a membership of 661,859 and a working capital of Rs. 46,427,842—that is to say, roughly three millions sterling.\* Different provinces show the movement in different stages of development, but on the whole the rate of progress is fairly uniform throughout, though there is a greater variety in matters of detail than the above account would indicate.

Bearing in mind the enormous population of India, and the fact that that population is almost entirely agricultural, it will readily be seen that the movement has up till now only affected a limited proportion of the community. At the same time its salutary influence is felt over a much wider social circle than that which is actually identified with it. In every area where it is at work the "mahajan," even if not put out of business altogether, is compelled to improve his methods and reduce his rates of interest very substantially.

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\* According to more recent information, Societies number 15,000 with a membership of 744,000 and a total working capital of over five millions sterling.

In a neighbourhood where a co-operative society is lending money at 12½ per cent. he can no longer hope to exact a usurious 75 per cent. But the indirect effects of such a society on the character and conduct of its members are infinitely more important. The Registrar in his report on the working of Co-operative Credit Societies in Bengal for the year 1913-14 draws special attention to these:—"Slowly but steadily the co-operative movement is working out an economic revolution in this province, the importance of which cannot be exaggerated. The gradual release of the masses from the thralldom of usury, the better use which the members now make of their credit facilities, the improvement of the indigenous system of money-lending affording relief every year to an increasing number of people not directly connected with the movement, the inculcation of the principles of self-help, the check which the system imposes on extravagance in social ceremonies, are some of the most direct and tangible results of the co-operative movement in this province. Instances can be multiplied to illustrate the indirect effects of the movement, how it promotes the moral and social improvement of the people, brings about a reformation of bad characters, creates a desire for education, encourages the settlement of village disputes by arbitration, discourages litigation, promotes a wider outlook on life, and makes village life healthier in all its relations. But it is useless to overburden the report with such instances every year. The possibilities of co-operation are great and varied; and it is not a misguided enthusiasm that claims for the movement the first place amongst those which have been set on foot to promote the moral and material improvement of the people."

In an earlier portion of this section I showed how primary societies are, as a rule, affiliated to central banking institutions and derive most of their capital from these. The latter are in a better position to attract outside capital, by way of loan or deposit, since their operations cover a wider area, and their headquarters are usually in a big centre of population, where many Indians of wealth and position live.

If the central banking authorities do their duty in supervising affiliated societies, they can assess, not only the assets, but the general creditworthiness of the latter, and need not incur any risk in their transactions with them. This in turn reacts on their own credit and enables them to borrow or receive deposits on more favourable terms. An additional element of security is provided, from the point of view of the outside public, by the annual audit carried out by the Registrar's department, not only of the accounts of central banks, but of those of their affiliated societies. A certain amount of inspecting is also done by the Registrar and his staff, though as the movement grows the proportion of socie-

ties thus inspected must decrease. The annual report of a Registrar usually begins something like this:—"I was on tour for 183 days and Maulvi Mūhammad Choinuddin for 244 days."

In many societies the capital forthcoming locally might be either too much or too little for the financial requirements of the society. In the case of village societies a deficiency could be made good by resort to its central bank, while the latter could also find a use for any excess capital such a society might possess. The difficulty in the case of central banks is got over to some extent by their borrowing and lending from one another. A glance at the statements of receipts and disbursements of central societies annually published will show that such loans are a normal and important feature of their business. This involves, however, an interlocking of liabilities which, according to the Report of the Committee on Co-operation in India (1915), might in certain circumstances have serious consequences.

An element of fluctuation is caused by the fact that there are certain seasons of the year when capital is required for agriculture, and yet again others when it is at liberty to flow back again into other channels. The consequence is that sometimes the resources of existing banking institutions are strained to the utmost to provide for the requirements of their members, while at other seasons they have more money on hand than they can profitably use. Their capital is thus alternately overworked and uselessly idle. Moreover, periods of scarcity, general or local, are liable to occur every few years, and under existing arrangements financial stringency would be greatest in those areas where and at those times when a fluid supply of capital was most necessary. In bumper years it is equally desirable that the excess profits of agriculture should flow readily into other industrial channels.

As the country involved was India, and not Ireland, the difficulty had scarcely been experienced before a business-like effort was made to solve it. In the case of Bengal a committee was appointed, and its recommendations would be in operation by now but for the war.\* The co-operative movement was too self-contained, and the remedy suggested was the formation of a Provincial Co-operative Bank, which should give the societies access to the wider money market of the world, and thus effect a balance between excess and deficiency of funds in different areas and at different times. The central banks were to be ordinary shareholders in the Provincial Bank, which also was to contain an equal number of individual preference shareholders, unlike the former, in-

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\* My impression is that they have since been carried out in spite of the war.—April, 1920.

eligible for loans. In short, the central banks were to stand to the Provincial Bank in the same relation as their own affiliated societies stood to them. When the organisation is complete, capital will be available on equitable terms for agricultural purposes when and where it is most wanted, and when not thus employed will be yielding a profitable return from other sources of investment.

In this connection it is worth noting that three provinces of India already have established Provincial Banks to fulfil these functions. The Committee on Co-operation in India, referred to above, reported in favour of the establishment of such banks in each of the remaining major provinces. It also considered it desirable that the whole fluid resources of co-operative banking institutions should be centralised in their respective provincial banks. *A propos* of the profitable employment of their capital throughout the whole year, it appears that in most provinces there is a demand for money in the cold weather for the purpose of moving the crops, so that the bank rate is then highest when repayments are being made by primary societies, and when money is least required for agricultural operations. This committee has brought to light much interesting information about the co-operative movement in India, and its report will well repay study.

The progress of co-operation in India has been really remarkable in view of the small percentage of literacy and the general backwardness of the country. It is tempting to account for it by the theory that its fundamental principle—the identity of the individual with the common good—is in accordance with the traditional spirit of India as expressed in her indigenous institutions. Certainly the corporate spirit of the ancient village communities was very strong, and with what disastrous results its economic basis was subverted and a *régime* of unorganised individualism substituted I have elsewhere pointed out. The greatest obstacle to the political progress of the India that is now passing away was the almost complete absence of a sense of citizenship. Village life was too isolated, social sympathy was confined to narrow bounds, and was further limited by caste and family considerations. Existing bonds were too narrow, and wider bonds were non-existent. The development of communications has destroyed the economic isolation of the village, and the co-operative organisation of society is adapting the social ideals of the old to the economic necessities of the new. A new economic fabric is growing up, like the old, in its sense of community of economic interest, but unlike it in the wider circle that this new sense of brotherhood reaches. Village societies in Pabna are affected by the fortunes of kindred societies in Midnapur, and what injures the one will react unfavourably on the other. The higher organisation of the

co-operative movement will widen and deepen this growing sense of community of economic interest. Already this provides one of the first conditions of the growth of a sense of citizenship.

But co-operative institutions do not fulfil merely an economic function. As already indicated, their successful working implies or develops qualities in the individual which are most desirable from the social point of view. They effect a silent reformation in nearly every relation of social life. They bind together men of different religions or castes in an association for the common good. A man's value as a co-operator will be estimated by his honesty, industry, and business intelligence, and not by his caste or hereditary position. In reading a report of the progress of co-operation in the United Provinces I was very much struck by a statement that cases had occurred where low-caste men were taking a prominent part in the management of the affairs of societies, were looked up to and respected by their fellows, and that, on the other hand, certain Brahmans who presumed on their social position to take larger loans than they required, or something of the kind, were made to understand that caste was not everything. As co-operative association is applied to one department of life after another, it may come to satisfy the social instinct almost completely, and other artificial groupings of society, like caste, will tend to lose their worst characteristics; the complete disappearance of the latter is not to be expected, especially as it is an essential part of the Hindu religion; all its vitality may pass into a new social order, but the outward form of caste will remain, if nothing else, as an interesting historical survival.

The spread of co-operation has awakened a very general desire for education; the apathy in educational matters which formerly characterised the Indian peasant has disappeared where his social horizon has been widened by membership of a co-operative society. It is not difficult to understand why such a person should no longer be content that his son should merely be able to affix his thumb-mark, when the account keeping of his local society is so important to him personally, and he cannot satisfy himself as to its accuracy without being able to read and write.

*The Statesman*—a leading Calcutta Anglo-Indian paper—devotes an editorial, in its issue of December 31st, 1914, to a recently published report on the progress of co-operation in the Punjab. It points out how the year under review was a critical one, inasmuch as the joint stock banks of the "swadeshi" type were closing their doors throughout the province, and many of the features of a commercial panic were present. The co-operative banks, however, not only weathered the storm, but greatly improved their position

financially and socially. The chief reason assigned for this satisfactory state of affairs was that the men responsible for the welfare of the latter were local men, well known to the depositors, familiar with agricultural problems, and, most important of all, possessed of that commercial morality so conspicuously absent in the muddling and bungling that characterised the management of the "swadeshi" banks. The leader then goes on: "Probably this factor of personality is also playing not a small part in the success of the activities of the societies in matters which do not pertain directly to their prime purpose of assisting agriculture. It is much that their influence should have lowered the rate of interest on agricultural loans to 10 or 12 per cent. as compared to the 20 or 25 per cent. of the private lenders. It is still more that those private lenders should have abandoned their opposition to the co-operative movement, and in many districts have placed their funds at the disposal of the societies. The success of the banking side of the societies is leading to more active co-operation in other directions—co-operation for the holding of produce against a better day and co-operation for combined sale of that produce. It has also led to co-operative insistence on the establishment of elementary schools in progressive districts, and even to co-operation in the suppression of extravagant if archaic customs in regard to marriage and other social functions. But the feature of the whole movement is that in and through all these activities the movement is relying on the men of the soil themselves, and probably its greatest service to India is the training in affairs it affords to the type of hard-working agriculturist, who is the real backbone of India. The Registrar of the societies in the Punjab and the Lieutenant-Governor do well in drawing the attention of the District officers to the existence of this new type of public man as a potential support to them in their efforts to provide the country with a sound administration."

It might be added that the continued development of "this new type of public man" will bring the question of granting wide powers of local self-government within the sphere of practical politics.\*

The attitude of the State to co-operation in India is apt to be misunderstood at home. It is apparently thought that the movement is spoon-fed by the Government, and cannot, consequently, have the same robust character as in a country like our own, where everything must come from popular

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\* Apropos of the growth and present position of the co-operative movement in India, the reader is advised to consult Mr. H. W. Wolff's recently published book on "Co-operation in India." Mr. Wolff is an authority of world-wide reputation to whom the co-operative movement in India and elsewhere owes much.—April, 1920.



initiative. I have also heard it said that "the bureaucracy" imposes rigorous and arbitrary restrictions on the spontaneous tendencies of Indians to co-operate. So far from the latter being the case, the force of inertia is as strong among the people of India as it is in Government circles at home, and a certain amount of hustling is sometimes necessary in order to get a movement started in a new district. But, after the necessary impulse has been given, the new society must depend on its own vitality for growth and development, and Government, while placing all the resources of the Registrar's department at its disposal and providing an annual audit, which it is hoped ultimately to transfer to an unofficial agency, takes no responsibility for its ultimate success or failure as a financial venture. Registrars and their staffs perform the same function for the co-operative movement in India that the I.A.O.S. does at home. Their business is to exercise a general supervision over it, think out its problems and help to solve them before they become dangerous, obtain from the proper authorities any administrative or other changes that experience has shown to be advisable, but, above all, to keep before all concerned the true co-operative ideal. They do their work in no mere spirit of official routine, but, from what I can gather, they often bring to it an enthusiasm worthy of the I.A.O.S. itself. In one important particular the analogy breaks down, since the I.A.O.S. is not usually on happy terms with the powers that be, and its recommendations are liable to be denounced by the elected "representatives" of the "democracy" as a "cruel conspiracy against trade," or something of the kind. However that may be, the fact remains that the co-operative credit movement in India has exceeded the most sanguine hopes of its founders, while in Ireland that part of the co-operative movement has been relatively unsuccessful.

The I.A.O.S. was financially incapable of providing adequate supervision and an annual local audit. In India an inspecting staff, paid by Government, provided the first requisite where unofficial local supervision was not possible, and an auditing staff, similarly maintained, audits the accounts of societies locally, free of cost in the case of infant and struggling societies. In Ireland the margin of difference between the rate of borrowing for the society and that of lending to members was so small that a reserve fund accumulated slowly, if at all. Legislative inertia prevented the solution of the problem along other lines in the absence of the possibility of increasing that margin. In India the "mahajan," with his usurious 75 per cent., enabled co-operative societies to build up a substantial reserve fund quickly by borrowing at, say, 12 per cent. and lending at 18 per cent., while at the same time affording a substantial

relief to their members. Other instructive differences will be noted subsequently.

The attitude of the State in India to co-operation has been one of helpful sympathy and encouragement, given with due regard to the limitations which the nature of co-operative institutions themselves imposes on State assistance. In Ireland the State has more often than not been a stumbling-block in the path of co-operative progress. The difference in the two cases is accounted for by the difference in the constitution of the governing power itself. If India had had representative institutions it would have repeated the experience of Ireland, since exactly the same interests would have been represented there, as in Ireland, to an extent out of all proportion to their social importance or economic usefulness. It is a curious thing about India that the people who pose as the pioneers of freedom and democracy, and desire to see an end of British rule, are precisely the people who have benefited most materially by the existence of the same rule in the past. Under a representative system the franchise would have to be confined to the "educated" classes, and the leading members of these classes, usually lawyers, zamindars, or moneylenders, constitute a trinity of evil (all three are often the same from different points of view) who have a vested interest in maintaining the present chaos of economic individualism with its possibilities of anti-social privateering and its sanctions in the mechanical administration of a soulless civil law. Imagine a Parliament consisting of John Dillons, Lord Clanricardes, and Sir Edward Carsons, and you have some faint idea of what an elected Indian political assembly would be like. A proposal to establish co-operative societies for the benefit of rural India would be strangled at birth in a Parliament thus constituted.

Political India was, generally speaking, apathetic or indifferent when it became known that Government intended to legislate on this subject. In order to prepare the ground men were sent through different portions of rural India to explain to the people how the Government proposed to help them to help themselves. The common people were delighted when they understood, and the first Bill became law, as already explained, in 1904. For the complete success of the co-operative movement voluntary work on the part of non-official Indians of intelligence and sympathy was absolutely necessary. This was a function which it was incumbent on the educated classes to perform, but up till a year or two ago Registrars had to complain year after year that their work was greatly impeded by the failure of this class to come forward in its support. I am glad to say that latterly this reproach has largely been removed, and in the more recent

reports Registrars gladly testify to the growing volume and great value of the non-official service thus rendered. Of course, one cannot expect a lawyer, who derives most of his income from money suits, or a money-lending, rack-renting zamindar, to show any particular enthusiasm for co-operative institutions, but there are plenty of educated men in India, though their average wealth may not be great, who are not economically dependent on the forces that are disintegrating Indian society. Though such men are now supporting a movement which is actually working, they could never have possessed the knowledge, sympathy, energy, and cohesion necessary for its *initiation* under the conditions of representative government. Such a system would have placed all political power in the hands of the most objectionable elements of Indian society, very much as it does at home, and the ordinary Indian, whether educated or not, would have been unable to free himself except by revolutionary means. After our experience of lawyer-politicians at home, it would be sinning against the light to give India a representative system in which, under present conditions, these and kindred classes must predominate.

Although I hope for much from the development of co-operative institutions in India, it must not be forgotten that they provide a remedy for indebtedness only when the amount involved is not greater than the assets on which it is secured. They solve for their members the problem of agricultural credit for the future, and their salutary influence is felt by a much wider circle than comes into immediate connection with the movement. But as regards that portion of the Indian population, estimated at one-third, which is in hopeless and permanent slavery to its creditors, nothing but the most drastic measures will suffice.

The unsatisfactory nature of the laws governing money-lending, the inequitable procedure by which money decrees are obtained, the absurd importance attached to documentary evidence, the business acumen or diabolical cunning of the money-lending classes, and the child-like simplicity, incredible ignorance, and asinine stupidity of their victims, all combine to form a problem which, from the social, economic, moral, domestic, and imperial point of view is of the utmost gravity.

That Government is alive to the influence of the civil courts as a factor in the problem is evident from the fact, mentioned above, that they were lately consulting their district officers, and, through them, the opinions of local representative men (representative opinion is a very different thing from the opinion of "representatives," and the former has, in *India* at any rate, some chance of making itself heard) about the possibility of preventing the civil courts from being used as instruments for exacting the usurious

demands of moneylenders. Some interesting examples of the evil of unregulated indebtedness were brought to light; on the strength of a mortgage bond for Rs. 5,700, given in 1887, at 2 per cent. per month compound interest, no less a tribunal than the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council gave in 1913 a decree for Rs. 2,700,000. *Fiat justitia ruat cælum*. It is doubtful if justice, except in the most figurative sense, was done in this case, but if it continues to lead to results such as this the immediate collapse of the sky would not be an unmixed calamity if this particular kind of "justice" were involved in the ruin.

The district officials with whom I had to do when in India were unanimous in recommending a legal limitation, not only of the rate of interest, but of the total interest recoverable. The figure suggested was an amount equivalent to the principal. A law of such a kind ought, in my opinion, to be made retrospective. The important thing to remember is that in the absence of such legislation even co-operation cannot save the classes that are indebted beyond the total value of their assets. No injustice will be inflicted on anybody if those who have already repaid twice the amount of their original loan are declared by law to be exempt from further liability. Co-operative societies might be started amongst such classes with some hope of success. In dealing with outstanding claims against any of its members the position of such a society would be immensely strengthened if some such legal limit were in existence, and the moneylender would have every inducement to accept a reasonable amount rather than go farther with the possibility of faring worse. This is a suggested reform about which the so-called "bureaucracy," or, at any rate, its district officers, seem enthusiastic, but about which the Indian "democracy" in its annual political congresses is strangely silent.

A copy of *The Statesman*, dated April 30th, 1916, comes to hand in which an editorial is devoted to a recent tribal movement of a seditious character, fomented by German intrigue. The editor criticises the judgment of a special tribunal appointed to inquire into the movement, on the ground that it lays too much stress on the part played by German intrigue and not enough on the underlying element of social discontent, in the absence of which the seed of agitation would have fallen on stony ground.

I make no apology for introducing a somewhat lengthy quotation from this able editorial:—"The Oraons have for generations been the prey of Hindu moneylenders and landlords, who have systematically robbed them of their land with every aggravation of cruelty and fraud. In a recent Settlement report of the Ranchi district we read: 'In Tekratole, thana Bero, the aboriginal ryots having refused to pay

enhanced rents, the landlord began a campaign against them, and has succeeded, mainly through the medium of suits, in ousting the whole aboriginal population of the village, and has replaced them by Hindus.' It will be observed that this spoliation was effected by 'the medium of suits.' The oppressor was able to invoke the assistance of British courts in depriving these primitive people of the land which they cultivated and in which they had customary rights. Not only has the Oraon to contend with the swindling zamindar, but he has to submit to the ruthless exactions of the Hindu Shylock, whose normal rate of interest is 75 per cent. Once in the grip of this blood-sucking parasite he has little chance of ever extricating himself. The moneylender, moreover, like the zamindar, invokes the aid of the courts, and British justice is polluted and caricatured by the sanction which it lends to mere plunder. When the disorders arising out of the unrest have been checked and punished, it is surely imperative that the real causes of the trouble should be found and removed."

### **Some Comparisons between India and Ireland.**

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For many years the different provinces in India have had their respective Departments of Agriculture. Their function is to bring scientific knowledge to bear on the problems of agriculture and to encourage the use of improved implements, introduce better seeds and manures, and, generally speaking, make cultivation, in its technical side, more efficient and profitable. For a long time not much progress was made, as the vast mass of unorganised and uneducated agriculturists could not be interested in such matters, and were too poor to turn such knowledge to practical account if it involved any considerable initial outlay. Since the coming of co-operative societies the experience of the Departments of Agriculture has been that the general level of intelligence of organised cultivators is raised and they are more ready to adopt the improvements it suggests. To induce the isolated cultivator to change his methods was found to be nearly always a hopeless task. The force of inertia and instinctive conservatism were too strong. But a Society usually contains a few men whose intelligence is above the average, and if they adopt a new idea their example will be followed as a matter of course by their fellow-members. In a Society whose members all know each other and are conscious of an identity of economic interest, the best men will always come to the top, and the general level of intelligence will approximate more and more to theirs.

It is only in the artificial political associations we are familiar with at home, where the whole duty of their members is to vote "right" perhaps once every five years, and they are conscious of little else that they have in common, that the worst elements predominate, and are able to misuse for their own private purposes the machinery which they control.

Consequently, one is not surprised to come across sentences like the following in the annual reports of the progress of co-operation in the different provinces:—"The Registrar is in consultation with the Director of Agriculture regarding the formation of societies designed to extend the use of agricultural improvements." Elsewhere we read:—"Once the Agricultural Department can guarantee the suitability of an improvement, such as manure or implements or superior seed, to a particular locality, there will be plenty of scope for Co-operative Societies in spreading information regarding it among their members and assisting with funds those whose resources are insufficient to enable them to adopt it. *The matter is one in which the Registrar should work in the closest consultation with the Director of Agriculture, who should keep the Registrar informed of any areas in which he considers that use can suitably be made of co-operative Societies in spreading a knowledge of the results achieved by the Agricultural Department.*"

If the Departments of Agriculture and of Co-operation, respectively, work harmoniously together in India, it is because its system of government allows the business of the country to be carried on in a businesslike way.

If the *personnel* of existing Indian political parties is any indication of the probable character of an elected Indian Parliament, this would no longer be possible under the conditions of representative government. Such a system could only be representative of the "educated" classes, who are a small and too often economically undesirable portion of the community, and whose interests are in many cases opposed to those of the great but inarticulate mass of India's peasant population.

Sweeping generalisations are always dangerous; it must not be imagined that existing Indian political parties contain no disinterested or genuinely statesmanlike elements. I have the utmost respect for the ideals and character of the late Mr. Gokhale, and of his associates, some of whom I have met. The exception, however, proves the rule. Mr. Gokhale was not a lawyer, unlike most Indian political leaders. If the gift of representative institutions would place power in the hands of people who shared his disinterested ideals there would be much to be said in its favour; for many reasons, however, that is extremely improbable. Some of the members

of a Society founded by him, and called the "Servants of India Society," are doing a useful work in Bombay by founding co-operative credit societies to free the city proletariat from usurious interest and debt. The co-operative movement in the Presidency generally has benefited much by their active assistance and sympathy. It is in the increasing part played by men of this stamp in problems of this kind that the true salvation of India will be found—social, economic, and ultimately political.

The machinery of representative government does not work well in Ireland, and if the Irish people were to continue electing to an Irish Parliament the same type of man that they have been sending to Westminster, no scheme of Home Rule would work very satisfactorily. Under existing conditions the sole qualification that is necessary for an Irish member is that he should be able to mumble the party pledge and walk through the right lobby door, under the guidance of his whip, when a division is taken in the House of Commons.\* Westminster is in a different planet so far as the intellectual outlook of Irish electors is concerned, and, apart from the main question of Home Rule, they take so little interest in what goes on there that their supposed representatives can quietly sacrifice the economic interests of their agricultural constituents to their own without any danger of being called to account. Their political position has all the advantages of power without responsibility. If a similar body of men were actually responsible for Irish government and administration in a local Parliament, all eyes would be turned on Dublin, and their incapacity or disingenuousness would soon be found out. Besides, a class of Irishmen would have the time and inclination to sit in a Dublin Parliament who could not, without neglecting their business or their profession, become members of the Imperial Parliament. The field of choice would be wider, thus lessening the influence of the political machine; the death of the "Irish question" would give birth to "Irish questions" which would cause new political groupings to come into existence and obliterate the landmarks of age-long controversy. If Home Rule is ever obtained I trust it will be as complete as possible, and that Ireland will not be content with wresting a subordinate Legislature from the Imperial Parliament, but will intellectually emancipate herself from the traditions of British politics to which her existing Parliamentarians seem to have succumbed, and draw her ideals, social, economic, and political, from genuinely national sources rather than continue to accept those which through centuries of association we have unconsciously assimilated from England.

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\* Nowadays Irish Members go to Wormwood Scrubs, Dartmoor, or Mountjoy, and the fleshpots of Westminster are tabooed.—April, 1920.

**“Harauri” Slavery in India—The Workers in  
Indian Cotton Factories—Labour in the Tea  
Gardens of Assam and Ceylon.**

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When in India I came across an economic phenomenon which is a real grievance, and might profitably occupy the attention of reforming Indian political parties. As a matter of fact, it was brought to the notice of Government by a very junior Indian Civilian who is a subdivisional officer. Incidentally, it provides yet a further illustration of the advantage of having administrative officers in general charge of a territorial unit, who can directly draw the attention of Government to matters requiring administrative or legislative adjustment. If a sound public opinion existed in India which was kept informed of such matters and could influence, but not control, the decisions of Government, reform would come even more easily than it does at present. Owing to the vast size of the country and the great variety of social and economic conditions, abuses such as that detailed below can pass for a long time unnoticed.

It appears that in portions of Bihar, and I have heard of the same thing in Madras, what are called “harauri” contracts are made. They are very prevalent among the landless labouring classes, and are often the final outcome of previous indebtedness. The borrower has usually no security to offer except his person, and the conditions of the contract are determined by that fact. He usually receives a lump sum at no interest at all, and a further sum at compound interest, and in return he contracts to render personal service to his creditor till the whole debt is cleared off. In a typical instance, a borrower received Rs. 5 at no interest at all and Rs. 45 at Rs. 1/9 per month C.I. He contracted:—

- (a) To perform all duties belonging to the cultivation of his master's land until the Rs. 45 with interest was paid off.
- (b) If he left his service before doing so he was to pay 4 annas a day as damages till he returned or was sued.
- (c) He was to receive no wages, but only a food allowance of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  seers.

At the end of twelve years he would owe, roughly, Rs. 400, since he could not possibly have made any money on his own account in the meanwhile. This is simply personal slavery under form of law, and, like slavery, it is hereditary. The contract is considered binding on a man's sons and his son's sons, and so on until the debt is discharged, or, in other words, till the Greek Kalends.

The problem of slavery for debt met with a drastic solution at the hands of a famous Athenian statesman in the early



part of the 6th century B.C. Its nature was probably not very different from what we are now dealing with in the case of India, and perhaps a similar remedy would be justified.

In another case a man contracted that for a sum of money his small son would dance for the creditor till the debt was paid off. This was simply legalised prostitution.

In practice such debtors are not sued if they default, but a criminal charge is trumped up against them, and thus pressure is put on them to return. Inexperienced officers often are deceived by such cases. In one case a Mukhtear openly informed a certain subdivisional officer that this was the true object of a complaint he was filing. He said he had done his best to dissuade his client, but it was no use, so he did the next best thing. How grievous must be the injustice of the whole system when it can turn the stomach even of a lawyer!

It is doubtful whether such contracts can be enforced in a civil court, and that is why more roundabout methods are adopted. Yet British law in India allows them to be registered like any other contract, and the fact that this can be done gives them a spurious validity in the minds of an ignorant populace.

A missionary with whom I travelled from Bombay to Madras gave me a very interesting account of a similar social phenomenon in the latter Presidency.

There are seven millions of the so-called "depressed" classes there, and in many cases they are in virtual slavery under a system just like the "harauri" system. They cannot escape once they are in the toils; *ex parte* decrees can be obtained against them at sight, however groundless the charge. The missionary is almost their only friend, and when any of his *protégés* get into trouble, if he can get hold of "puka" facts he usually gets him off. In bigger cases my informant procured the services of a certain Brahmin vakil, who gave them for a merely nominal fee. Once again it appears there is sometimes some soul of goodness even in the minions of the law.

There is, however, one way of escape for people in this position, but in the opinion of the same authority it is a case of "out of the frying-pan into the fire." They may join a recruiting gang of coolies bound for the plantations of Ceylon or elsewhere. Such coolies after they leave Madras are never heard of again. They go away in droves continually, but only a very rare one straggles back to his native village. They are really lured away under false pretences. Labour recruiters go round the villages, seek out the discontented, and encourage them to join by painting a quite untrue picture of the paradise that awaits them in Ceylon. A similar

state of affairs existed, or did exist, with regard to Assam; before dealing further with the actual conditions of this problem, a short description of the economic status of workers in Indian factories will not be out of place.

The manufacture of cotton has developed considerably in India within the last few years. Only the poorest qualities are manufactured there, and better-class cotton goods are still imported from Lancashire. The industry is largely in the hands of the Indians themselves. In Ahmedabad alone there are 55 factories, all of which are financed by Indian capital and are managed largely by Indian agency. They pay about 15 per cent. on capital, but managing directors usually draw about 40 per cent. in salary and interest combined. The unskilled labourers employed are mostly low-caste Hindus of poor physique and little or no education. The men receive about 15s. and the women about 13s. 4d. per month. Children are allowed by law to work half-time, and are paid about 6s. 8d. per month. In practice they work half-time every day at two different factories, and usually escape detection. Skilled workers, *e.g.*, weavers, are paid from 26s. 8d. to 40s. per month. These wages are relatively good considering the low general rate of wages that prevails in India. The result of the starting of the factories has been that wages generally have doubled in Ahmedabad district in the last ten years. It should be added that the factory worker in India has not yet become quite divorced from the land. Many of this class in Bombay are not natives of the city, and return periodically to the villages of their birth, where their kinsmen are probably still connected with agriculture. When the divorce has become quite complete a new class will have arisen bringing with it a new set of social problems, if the experience of Western countries is in any sense a guide.\*

The growth of factory life has been mentioned as an influence making for caste disintegration; the workers generally are low-caste people, and as they have not much caste to lose, it would be unwise to expect great changes in this respect from this cause.

The danger of factories in India, where labour is cheap, underselling the products of the West is also more apparent than real. If labour is relatively cheaper in India it is relatively much less efficient. An Indian weaver can manage two and a half looms on the average, but an English weaver, I am told, twice that number, and the latter probably does much better work. A contractor who had experience of making railways in America, and also in an Eastern country, said that, taking everything into consideration, the cost of

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\*This information relates to years 1914-15.

labour averaged about the same in the two countries. The Indian workman puts very little interest or intelligence into factory work, and it is said that no case is on record where he has suggested any mechanical improvement. Once such a worker has got accustomed to a particular machine he will never leave it, however slight the change. If he is accustomed to work at a machine which draws out cotton thread to a particular stage of fineness, he will not even go to another which is practically identical, except that it draws the thread out finer still. The Indian workman is a lover of routine, and is averse to changes on principle, or rather out of a kind of characteristic mental inertia.

The most interesting thing about factory life in India is the method by which labour is obtained and discipline exercised. In Ahmedabad what are called "jobbers" have under their control each a different group of workmen. The jobber is usually a Mahomedan of good physique, and thus able to inspire terror if necessary. His men are under his immediate and direct control, and all relations between them and the factory management pass through him as intermediary. He is responsible to the factory for their efficiency and good conduct, but they are responsible solely to him. The latter is paid a salary which varies from £3 6s. 8d. to £6 12s. 8d. per month, according to the class of labour he controls. If he is dissatisfied for any reason he takes his men out on strike and obtains employment for them elsewhere. There is a Millowners' Association in Ahmedabad, but they have something to learn yet from employers at home, and will not refuse the services of workers who have thus left another millowner's factory. The workers themselves, however, would never dream of going on strike except at the will of the jobber. The system is perhaps too patriarchal for our Western notions, but as it actually works it has a lot to commend it.

Indian labour is inclined to be rather casual. Fifteen days' wages are always kept in hand as a security against departure without the formality of giving notice. About 5 per cent. of factory hands are constantly absent owing to sickness or other cause. The workers cook and eat their food in the factory compound, and in the hot weather each man spends about two or three hours of the working day lounging about or smoking a hookah.

The office staff, or "babus," usually belong to one of the higher castes and have been to a university. I was told that a babu obtains about 13s. 4d. a month, and can live on this. The workers are usually very improvident, and one of them drawing £2 a month may often be in debt to a babu whose salary is only 13s. 4d. In fact, the latter are said to add largely to their income by usury practised at the

expense of the former. In Bombay and the neighbourhood co-operative credit societies have been started among mill hands with satisfactory results; the system is being extended as rapidly as possible. I have already referred to the invaluable work done by certain members of the "Servants of India Society" in this form of social service.

With regard to the position of labour on the tea gardens of Assam, there are two distinct aspects of that question. The first is the method by which coolies are recruited from their homes in different parts of India; the second is their treatment when they actually reach Assam. That province has only recently been developed, and when its suitability for the growth of tea was discovered, as its own population was relatively scanty, and Assam was considered a distant and barbarous country by the rest of India, it was found necessary to take drastic measures in order to supply the tea plantations with their necessary quota of coolie labour.

The worst features of the older system have been abolished by a recent enactment of the Indian Government. A correspondent in an Anglo-Indian newspaper describes it as the "system whereby the tea industry has obtained labour by cash purchase of coolies at the market rate per head." Contractors were sent to neighbouring provinces, where they practised all kinds of deceit in order to lure their victims into attaching their thumb marks to contracts which it was criminal to break. When the latter were safely deposited in the promised land they got a sad disappointment, and the others got their price per head. The conditions of labour may not actually have been hard, but compared with the rosy picture that had been painted they were hard indeed.

Something might perhaps have been said in extenuation of a system which recalls many of the features of negro slavery, while the tea industry was still struggling and coolies had to be brought by fair means or foul if it was to survive. When employment was scarce in other parts of India, as an alternative to starvation even emigration to Assam might have some advantages. What was begun from apparent necessity was too long maintained for profit, and the tea interests reluctantly consented to obtain their labour in the open market long after they had ceased to have any real claim for special treatment in the matter. They took some time to disabuse their minds of the idea that the employment they had to offer was the only refuge for the half-starved coolie labourer of other parts of India. As a matter of fact, for the last few years the coolie has been in great demand for labour in the factory, the mine, on the road or railway, and elsewhere, and it was only fair that the tea interests should compete on equal terms with other employers and pay the full market price for the labour they required.

A quotation from a recent Provincial Government Resolution on the subject lays special emphasis on this point.

"Another year of general prosperity has served to confirm the already established fact that, in spite of increased efforts at recruitment, the present attractions of the tea gardens cannot under normal conditions compete with those of home employment. The past year has seen the labourer maintain and even improve his position; in every industry, in the field, the factory, the mine, or on railway or irrigation works, it is the labourer who has held the upper hand, it is the employer who has had to compete for his services. It is small wonder, therefore, that, enjoying this position at home, the coolie is not tempted in any great degree to risk for the wage that Assam offers the vague uncertainties of life on a distant tea garden."

Since the recent improvements in the system of recruiting the tea gardens are compelled by law, as far as possible, to rely on the legitimate attractions they have to offer (as represented by returned coolies to their friends and neighbours) for the steady flow of labour they require. Various attempts were made to improve the working of the "contractor" system before it was finally abolished, but they were evaded, as all laws are which make impossible demands on human nature.

Coolies are also recruited in India for the Fiji Islands under certain acts of legislation, and one of the devices used by recruiters for Assam in order to get over the legal difficulties that hampered recruiting for that field of labour was to represent that they were really recruiting for the Fiji Islands, which, as the coolies were afterwards informed, was a place a few hundred miles north-east of Calcutta!

With regard to the treatment of labour in Assam, opinion is more divided, but it seems clear that even-handed justice as between man and man was not always administered even by British officials in that province. The duty of District Officers was to inspect the gardens and see that the conditions of the Act were duly complied with, but many of these gardens were situated in the wilderness, and when the officer of Government went there he would probably have to accept the hospitality of the Manager of the estate he came to inspect, since in all probability there was not another house where a European could spend a night for miles around. One cannot accept a man's bread and salt and then report unfavourably on the management of his estate. At headquarters there might be a number of gardens, but, if so, their managers were prominent members of the local clubs, and it is hard for a European Magistrate to believe that the man with whom he has played billiards or bridge night after night has beaten one of his coolies to death or assaulted a girl under twelve, even though both accusations are perfectly true and

are supported by irrefutable evidence. Moreover, many tea-garden managers are important members of District Boards, and they have their representative on the Legislative Council. A few of them might be expected to have the ear of the Chief Commissioner, and their representations might affect the decisions of still higher authorities. In these circumstances it might be politic to overlook many things to which a higher ideal of justice would demand attention. After all, even Indian civilians are human.

In a case that was brought to my notice, Mr. X, a tea planter, was accused of the culpable homicide of a coolie on his estate. The prosecution alleged that Mr. X had given leave of absence to a coolie woman for purposes that need not be inquired into. She did not want to go, but continued working, whereupon Mr. X sought out her husband and inquired why his wife had thus disobeyed him. His answer not being satisfactory, Mr. X knocked him down, with fatal results. The defence asserted, among other things, that the husband, instead of giving Mr. X a civil answer, was impertinent, so that the action of the latter was to some extent extenuated as proceeding from a sudden burst of wrath. In this case the Public Prosecutor did not turn up in court till the prosecution case was finished, and only the defence had the benefit of legal assistance. The decision was watered down to one of culpable homicide under "grave and sudden provocation." The barrister employed for the defence, having done his duty as a good lawyer and got his client off comparatively scatheless, proceeded to do his duty as a good citizen by asking a question at the next meeting of the Provincial Legislative Council, of which he was a member, as to why the Public Prosecutor had not put in an earlier appearance!

The high reputation they have obtained elsewhere in India for unswerving fidelity to the principles of justice, even where their own countrymen are concerned, has unfortunately not been lived up to by European officials in Assam. The explanation is that "one cannot live in Rome and fight with the Pope." Before the reunion of Bengal, when Assam was part of a larger administrative entity, there was some hope of escape for a conscientious officer. When he had alienated the tea interests in Assam he might fly for refuge from the hornet's nest he had stirred up to a peaceful district of Bengal. Now Assam is a province by itself, and the officer who goes there must make up his mind to spend his official life within its bounds. Whether that life will be pleasant or otherwise will be determined by the degree of his complaisance to interests which it would be dangerous to offend.

With regard to Ceylon, I will set down as briefly as possible the facts about coolie labour on the tea and rubber estates

as they were told to me by a man who was in a position to know them from the employer's point of view. The coolies that are recruited from Southern India are mostly low-caste people. They work under the immediate control of "overseers," who superintend their labour. The functions of the latter seem to some extent analogous to those of "jobbers" in the factories of Ahmedabad. The overseers receive a salary of from £2 to £4 per month from the tea company, and, in addition, a bonus of  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per man per day for each day their coolies work. The male coolies on tea estates draw about  $5\frac{1}{2}$ d. and the female 4d. per day, with a slight bonus for each additional pound of tea leaves pulled above a certain amount. Rice is given to the coolies by the tea company at rather less than cost price, and the price is deducted from their wages, so that the average coolie only obtains about 2s. 8d. per month in cash. Most estates have schools, and the salary of the teacher is paid by the tea company. Coolies are also given free lodging and medical attendance, but the medical man employed by the company is rarely a "puka" doctor. Occasionally a European manager undertakes to prescribe for the coolies, and the results are sometimes rather startling. However, as the same man gives the patient an overdose with consequences that may be fatal, and writes his death certificate, in which death is attributed to "natural causes" or "inflammation of the lungs" or something else that sounds all right, the authorities are satisfied and scandals do not occur. The coolies are usually hopelessly in debt to their overseers, and the latter owe a corresponding amount to the company, but the company does not mind. Under the existing state of the law, a coolie who absconds without paying his debts may be brought back from anywhere in Ceylon and put in prison. Such a coolie may not hope to obtain work on a different garden, as the planters have a strong association among themselves, and no planter will take on a new coolie from another garden without a signed discharge from the last employer.

The only authorised procedure by which employment may be changed is at the discretion of the overseer, who in that case takes the whole gang along with him. In such circumstances the manager of the estate to which they wish to attach themselves, as a matter of etiquette, obtains the formal consent of the former employer. Part of the readjustment affected is the transfer of the debts of the overseer from the first to the second employer. Tea plantations in Ceylon are usually a very paying concern. Capital invested in them yields about 15 per cent., and the average investor will not consider anything less than 10 per cent. as worth having. The planting interests are a dominating influence in Ceylon;

in out-of-the-way places planters lead a very partriarchal life, and, like the Cyclops, seem to be a law unto themselves. As regards both Assam and Ceylon, one cannot help feeling that civilisation would gain by people at home being better informed about, and taking a deeper interest in, the conditions under which some of the amenities of their life are produced.

### Christian Missionary Effort in India.

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A few remarks about the different agencies for social, religious, and political reform may not be out of place here.

I came across Christian missionaries of various denominations, and have pleasant recollections of their hospitality and interesting conversation. One cannot resist the conclusion that they are doing good work in the interests of religion and humanity; the Albert Kahn Fellow cannot afford to ignore their existence, and will profit by his intercourse with them, since they are familiar with Indian problems from a point of view with which the Government officer or the business man is necessarily unacquainted. It is a good thing that Western civilisation should be represented in India by the missionary as well as by the soldier, the business man, or the Government official. It may enable the Indian to realise that we are not altogether mercenary and our civilisation not entirely materialistic. The attitude of Government is necessarily neutral in religious matters, but in India, as in China, generally speaking, the cause of Christianity is not advanced by the business methods and private lives of Europeans engaged in commerce in those countries.

The missionary is often the best and only friend of the poor and oppressed classes in India. One instance at least has already been given, and it will not be out of place to add that an S.P.G. missionary from Choto-Nagpur, by his constant letters to the Anglo-Indian papers on the subject, contributed very largely to the great improvement which has recently taken place in the method of recruiting coolie labour for Assam.

Indian Christians number nearly four millions in all; an unduly large proportion is said to belong to the lower, or so-called "depressed," classes. While Christianity could not, consistently with its principles, discourage the accession of these to its ranks, it seems to be unfortunately true that this fact has aroused a very undemocratic prejudice against the Christian faith in the minds of the higher classes, especially the Brahmans. Up till the middle of the last century Christianity attracted those members of the educated classes of Indian society who were dissatisfied with the absurdities



of their own religion. About that time, however, the "Brahmo Samaj" was founded, and with it a double process was set on foot, in one or both of which respects it has been followed by later and, at the present time, more virile movements. All that was best and most attractive in Christianity, particularly the teachings of Jesus, was extracted from its doctrines and formed part of the Scriptures of new sects, which nevertheless rejected Christianity itself. At the same time Hindus discovered once more the treasures of spiritual knowledge hidden away in their own sacred writings, and the cry, "Back to the Vedas," was raised and has figured prominently in religious reform movements ever since. The latter-day Hindu, who has learnt to think on religious matters, finds spiritual comfort in one or other of these new sects, if he does not become an Agnostic, and is no longer attracted to the Christian fold. It ought to be frankly recognised that the Indian character is definitely religious and has a tremendous capacity for spiritual development. At the same time, in the long course of their history the Hindus have come to possess a very definite point of view on religious matters. They have their own religious ideas, and many of them are capable of defending them in argument with a vigour and a display of reasoning power which is very disconcerting to a Christian who has expected them to crumble at the trumpet blast of his faith like the walls of Jericho. The misfortune has been that sufficient attention has not been paid to the study of Indian religions by Christian missionaries as a training for their callings; the subject has too often been treated with a contempt it did not deserve. Many of the older missionaries have made good the defect and are first-class authorities on native religions.

But the younger men will be relatively useless until they have qualified themselves in this respect, and the authorities at home will waste much money and energy until they make definite provision for the training of their younger men in the languages and civilisations of India before they are sent out. Indian civil servants are given an all-too-short year of probation with this object in view, and a bad impression will remain in India if the missionaries of Western civilisation in its religious aspect are not placed at least on a level with those whose civilising functions are purely secular. What the people at home have to remember is that unless the missionary understands and can, to some extent, sympathise with the point of view of the Indian he seeks to convert, he will not be able to teach him how much better his own religion is and cannot hope to persuade him to adopt it. In the absence of such training Christian missionaries will have to confine themselves more and more to the depressed and unintelligent classes, and will not be able to influence the classes

whose spiritual potentialities would make them a richer conquest.

Christianity has been mentioned as a possible basis of unification for India, and the analogy of the early Roman Empire has been quoted.

The conditions, however, are by no means similar, since the pagan world of antiquity had exhausted its own religious resources and needed a new and spiritual religion to quicken and revive it. The spiritual resources of India are by no means exhausted, and while certain Christian ideals are welcomed and exercise a modifying influence, a definite reaction against Christianity itself seems to have set in. If Christianity did ever become the religion of India it would probably be modified so much in the process that Western Christianity would scarcely recognise its own spiritual offspring.

### **The Brahmo Samaj and the Prarthana Samaj.**

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The "Brahmo Samaj" is the oldest of modern religious movements in India. As its force seems to have spent itself by this time it may be dismissed very briefly. Brahmoists believe in one God, who reveals Himself in Nature, in history, and, above all, in the souls of man. Their fundamental criterion of religious truth is an intuitive one. "Our ideas of the Divinity are not abstract and intellectual, but are based upon direct and intuitive knowledge. Our faith in God is not so much a conception as a spiritual perception." In these words Keshab Chunder Sen sets forth the fundamental position of the religion he advocated. In its actual treatment of religious questions the method of the Brahmoist is rationalistic. They will accept no doctrines that are in conflict with reason or conscience. On the other hand, it is eclectic as regards the actual sources from which it derives the religious writings it values. The Brahmo Samaj claims to have done much to popularise the teachings of Jesus, and to have revived the study and brought about the true appreciation of the Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita. As one of its preachers has said, it "venerates, cherishes, loves, calls its own, the Scriptures of all." Brahmoism holds that all men are equal in the sight of God, and as such it is opposed on principle to the caste organisation of Indian society.

The movement, however, seems to have lost its power of expansion, so far as numbers are concerned, and its present leaders are said to be in danger of becoming as dogmatic in practice as they are broad-minded in theory. There is no

need to dwell on the causes which have prevented the Brahmo Samaj from becoming a really popular movement, since they lie, so to speak, on the surface. Individual Brahmoists are prominent in the social reform and political movements, but the Brahmo Samaj as such was not a successful agency for social reform. The objection to caste was based on *à priori* principles, and arguments derived from this source do not appeal to the instinctive conservatism of the orthodox Hindu mind.

The Brahmo Samaj originated and flourished in Bengal. Bombay also has seen the origin of a movement called the "Prarthana Samaj." Its object from the beginning was more definitely to promote social reform, but it had a religious aspect as well. As its religious principles are indistinguishable from those of Brahmoism, they need not detain us long. It may be taken as typical of the movements whose main object is social reform. Their general object is to bring about the conditions out of which a real Indian nation might arise. It is not immediately political, but their efforts, if successful, would have most valuable consequences of a political character. They see in caste, early marriage, the purdah system, and the impossibility of Hindu widows re-marrying the most serious of the obstacles which they seek to remove, and all of them are sanctioned by religion and endeared to the hearts of the orthodox by their supposed venerable antiquity. Their method is to meet the religious objection on its own ground, and by appealing to the authority of the most ancient sacred books to show that they are of comparatively recent origin, and are, in fact, a corruption of the noble simplicity of primeval times.

Early in the 19th century two of the worst social customs of the Hindus, "suttee" and Thuggism, were put down by special legislation vigorously administered. The practice of infanticide which prevailed in many parts of India was made illegal in 1870, and the law has been fairly successful wherever it has been regularly applied. A certain Pundit discovered in an ancient sacred book that the re-marriage of widows was legal in certain conditions, and at his request an Act was passed in 1856 legalising such marriage. The Act has not led to a very great number of such marriages, and the position is still one where every such marriage is noted and reckoned up.

The treatment of widows in Hindu society is an outrage on humanity. Girl children are married often under the age of ten, and if the husband dies, even before they have actually lived together, his widow must remain unmarried for the rest of her natural life. The position of the *virgin widow*, an expression which would be a contradiction in terms in any society with which people at home are familiar, is a

disgrace to Hindu society. Monsieur Chailley says on page 151 of his book:—"Candid natives declare that the life of a high-caste Hindu widow is a hell. Subject to her mother-in-law, often coveted by the men of her family, she is required to be as discreet as a nun and as hard-working as a slave; and many observers declare that widows would prefer suttee."

The purdah system was adopted by the Hindus from the Mahommedans partly in imitation of their social ideas and partly as a measure of self-protection. It exists in different degrees, but, generally speaking, it is a luxury that only the comparatively well-to-do can afford, and its evils are confined to those classes.

Where the Hindu and Mahommedan populations are most nearly equal the purdah system is most prevalent. At any rate, the traveller will notice that it is very strict in Central and Upper India, whereas it scarcely seems to exist in Bengal, Bombay, and Southern India. It places great obstacles in the way of the development of education among women, which is a misfortune, not only for themselves, but for their children.

The evil of early marriage is most noticeable among the rich and in the higher castes, and, like the purdah system, is largely confined to the central and northern parts of India. In former times, when the ravishing or enslavement of women was the normal consequence of the sack of towns, the Hindus hastened to marry their daughters at the earliest possible moment, hoping that thus they would have less value in the eyes of a conquering soldiery. The tendency, however, was an old one, for even some centuries before Christ it was part of Hindu religious law that a girl should be married before the age of puberty.

Purdah and early marriage are partly responsible for the low physique of the Indians who practise these customs. Immature parents have feeble children, and the consequences of child-bearing are often fatal to the mother. In such cases a woman whose whole life is spent behind the curtain must suffer in physical as well as mental constitution. In any case, I was told that an Indian woman is old at thirty (many of them are grandmothers at that age) and a man at forty. The average lifetime in India is about thirty-five, as compared with fifty in European countries. The difference is too great even after making all due allowance for the effect of climate.

In 1892 the Government of India passed the "Age of Consent Act," in which it was enacted that a marriage should not be consummated until the contracting parties had reached a certain age. Its effects have been practically nil. For

reasons which have already been indicated, the Government is peculiarly powerless in matters of this kind; the only hope of reform is from the Indians themselves. There is a small but earnest party which recognises the paramount importance of social reform; the difficulties to be overcome are tremendous, and not least of them is the lack of moral courage, which prevents many of its professed adherents from practising what they profess. I cull the following from a propagandist pamphlet written in the interest of the Brahmo Samaj:—

“Female education, prohibition of early marriage, and widow re-marriage are the favourite subjects of the average orator, but we know how many even of our leaders in society are afraid to put these precepts into practice.\* Everyone speaks of female education, but how many are there who are bold enough to keep their girls in school after the age of puberty? How many of the prominent men who talked of the evil of early marriages on platforms have married their own daughters within their teens, and how many of the advocates of widow-marriage reform have kept their own widowed virgin daughters unmarried and were even afraid to fraternise with re-married couples by attending dinners given in their honour?”

In 1878 Keshab Chunder Sen, the talented leader of the Brahmo Samaj, though a public supporter of social reform, including the prohibition of early marriage, was weak enough to marry his own daughter, who was then under fourteen years of age, to a Maharajah's son who was only fifteen. This event, when it became known, gave rise to internal dissensions and schism, which, needless to say, did not promote the fortunes of the new religious movement.

### Caste.

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Caste is, of course, one of the most obvious of the social institutions of India which will have to be modified if that country is to develop into a real political community. Like most things, it is not altogether evil, and some of its features are more absurd than harmful. It has provided an organisation of society which has the merit of stability, and has preserved Hindu civilisation intact through the stormy centuries of Indian history. The stability, however, is that of stagnation, a condition of society in which progress is impossible and social disease is apt to be rife. It seems probable that the caste organisation of Indian society is being more seriously modified by economic and other forces brought into existence under the Pax Britannica than it was by the invasions and revolutions of earlier times.

It is difficult for a European, especially if he has only a short acquaintance with the country, to understand the true nature of caste and the extent of the influence it exercises on its members. The position differs in different parts of the country and among different classes of the population. I have met and dined with Bengalis who seemed, nevertheless, still to remain in caste. In fact, caste seems to be with Bengali "babus" a garment that they can put on or off at pleasure. I found a similar state of affairs in Bombay; but in the United Provinces rules are more strict, and a Hindu friend of mine there seems to have made up his mind to remain definitely out of caste. Although certain ceremonies were gone through, his caste-fellows still continued to treat him as a man who had lost caste. However, he does not seem to mind, and as he is a widower and has no desire to re-marry, his position does not cause him any practical inconvenience.

I was furnished with a memorandum on the subject of caste in Gujarat and the Deccan by a very estimable Indian whom I met in Ahmedabad. Many of the following points have been obtained from this source.

The chief features of caste are that it restricts relations with regard to (a) marriage and (b) commensality. The field of the former is more restricted than that of the latter; *e.g.*, many Brahman castes may dine together though they may not intermarry. Caste principles have relaxed with regard to commensality to a greater extent than with regard to intermarrying. A breach of the former may be atoned for by fine or penance, but a person who offends against the latter has few, if any, chances of returning to the bosom of caste.

Scarcity of brides in their own castes has induced Brahman castes to allow marriage relations with certain other Brahman castes, but this only proves that human nature is stronger than the artificial barriers imposed by convention. As soon as the immediate difficulty has been got over, the chances are that the gates will be closed once more. In some cases the restrictions have been formally relaxed; in other cases their occasional breach has been connived at, or palpably false evidence has been accepted to the effect that the bride chosen fulfilled the requirements of caste regulations.

As regards commensality, no formal relaxation of restrictions has been decreed, though in practice the actual changes that have taken place are much greater. In theory the highest castes cannot drink soda-water touched by those whose contact makes it ceremonially impure. In actual fact, however, these things are freely partaken of, and no one thinks of depriving any Hindu of his caste for this reason.

With regard to food cooked or touched by non-Hindus, the position is not the same, though the castes generally prefer to assume ignorance of individual cases, however well known to their members, unless a complaint has been formally lodged, in which case action would have to be taken.

Travelling by sea to Europe or America is a breach of the regulations of certain castes, though, strangely enough, the same rule does not apply to Hindus going to Aden, Zanzibar, South Africa, or Singapore. Hindus returning from Europe and America are generally re-admitted on payment of a fine and after the performance of a purificatory ceremony. The general tendency, however, is to reduce the former and simplify the latter. An England-returned Hindu who does not obtain re-admission in this way is no longer persecuted. Technically, he is out of caste, but in practice a good deal of social intercourse with him is winked at.

In 1912 a conference was held at Bombay by the organisation known as the Aryan Brotherhood. At this conference resolutions were passed declaring the undesirability of caste. A public dinner was held at which the delegates were present, amongst whom were two members of the "untouchable" classes. Certain newspapers opposed to social reform raised a great agitation and demanded that these people should be outcasted. The Deccanis were not molested in any way by their castes, but the Gujaratis were put out of their castes. Most of the latter performed the necessary ceremonies and were re-admitted, but a few refused to recant and are still out of caste, among others the gentleman to whom I am indebted for many of these facts. I conclude by quoting in full his final remarks on this interesting subject:—

"Castes are neither trade guilds nor associations for the promotion of common interests. They are simply based on birth. They possess no common and mean no special feature. Castes have become water-tight compartments disintegrating society into irreconcilable fractions. The sole function of caste is to limit the area of dining and marrying relations. Caste is not able to guide the social, economic, moral, or religious life of its members. A Brahmin who is illiterate would not be compelled by his caste to apply himself to studies, and would not be put out of caste for that reason. A fraudulent trader would have nothing to fear from his caste as such. A man may openly avow that he does not believe in the Hindu religion or in any religion, and yet he may remain in his caste so long as he does not break the rules of dining and marrying. A man convicted of murder would not for that reason be put out of caste. A Brahmin living with a Mahomedan concubine and having children by her would not be put out of caste so long as he is not

proved to be eating food touched by her. Traders or artisans belonging to one caste cannot utilise their caste relations for promoting their business concerns. Organisations on modern lines formed irrespectively of caste relations have to be resorted to for such purposes.

"The effect of the collision of caste with modern influences is very great indeed.

"Notions of caste superiority and caste exclusiveness have given way before the levelling forces of modern civilisation. Men travelling together in a railway compartment or working together in a Government office, or trading together in a joint stock company have to forget their castes for the time being and to recognise their equality. A Brahmin serving under a Bania in a Government department or a mercantile firm has to sacrifice the idea that in society he is superior to the Bania. High-caste Hindus on returning from an office presided over by non-Hindus used to bathe and wash their clothes to remove the pollution supposed to be caused. The increasing complexity of engagements in life and the strain of official work have long since put an end to this notion of caste purity. When the railway was first brought to India it was thought pollution for a high-caste Hindu to drink water or take food while sitting in a railway carriage, in consequence of the pollution caused by the presence of non-Hindus and 'untouchables.' Very few even among the orthodox now observe such restrictions. Twenty-five years ago Hindus would not take tea while sitting on a carpet on which Parsis or Mahommedans were sitting, and if tea was to be served in a gathering, the Parsis and Mahommedans would be asked to move out of the carpet. The practice has now mostly disappeared. Residence in large cities and meeting other communities on common platforms have imperceptibly subordinated caste to other considerations.

"Caste has been broken and is being broken on many sides, though it has still retained its outer shape."

The social reform party directs some of its efforts towards the encouragement of intermarriage between castes. Government, however sympathetic towards social reform in general, recognises its true function in the matter and contents itself with permissive legislation. The Act legalising the remarriage of widows and the Age of Consent Act are essentially of this character. Neither of these Acts has been taken advantage of to a very marked extent, but that is not the fault of Government. I have heard complaints to the effect that the efforts of the social reform party in favour of intermarriage between castes are being thwarted by the existing state of the law on the subject of marriage, which is said to recognise nothing except what is permitted by the orthodox.



The grievance, however, is not a very great one, as will appear from facts derived from the memorandum referred to above. Different sub-castes can modify their marriage relations at will, and marriages between members of different sub-castes of the same main division of Hinduism are, I believe, quite legal. If a sub-caste prefers to confine its marriage relations to itself, that is not the fault of the Government. Within the limits of the existing law on the subject there is room for considerable progress in the direction of breaking down absurd marriage restrictions, and till these limits have been nearly reached and the movement begins to be handicapped by the legalised exclusiveness of the four main divisions of Hinduism with regard to marriage, the social reformers have little to complain of; people at home would be thankful if the legal lions in their path of reform of every kind were so few and so easily removed.

### The Arya Samaj.

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I have deferred consideration of the Arya Samaj up to the present because I consider that it is one of the most important movements of the kind in India. It was founded in 1875 at Bombay by a most remarkable man, Swami Dayananda Saraswati. He was not a scholar in the Western sense, but was deeply learned in the sacred lore of his religion. His interpretation of the true Vedic religion is contained in his work, the "Satyarth Prakash."

His commanding personality, untiring energy, and somewhat ascetic moral character have left a lasting impress on the movement which he founded and for which he died a martyr's death at the hands of a fanatical assassin.

The Arya Samaj is primarily a religious movement. But it is religious in the widest sense, since it considers that religion should take account of every detail of human life. From its point of view, in the absence of true religion, moral corruption, social disintegration, and national shame are bound to result. Swami Dayananda could not find in the idolatrous practices and meaningless ceremonies of orthodox Hinduism a religion that satisfied his spiritual wants. On the contrary, he regarded the decay of true religion as one of the causes of foreign rule, in itself evil, but under existing conditions the only condition under which reform is possible. "If you expel the English," he writes, "then no later than to-morrow you and I, and everyone who rises against idol worship, will have our throats cut like mere sheep."

His view of Indian history is that it presents a lamentable fall from a golden age that existed in the dim and distant

past. Conversely, his conception of the true path of reform is that, as far as possible, the conditions then existing should be restored. In other words, his war-cry is "Back to the Vedas." This involves a return to the primitive simplicity of the ancient religion as interpreted by him, but it also involves social and moral regeneration, and the great reformer is fully alive to that fact.

According to him, the Vedas contain a strictly monotheistic view of God, and are the revelation of his wisdom to the "Rishis," or holy men of old. Consequently, they are inspired and must be regarded as absolutely true. In addition to purely religious knowledge, they are said to contain the germs of all sciences that have since been developed. It is not for me to say whether Swami Dayananda correctly interprets the Vedas in all particulars. His work has been amplified and developed considerably by a much greater scholar, Pandit Guru Datta, who was well versed in the religious and philosophic thought of both East and West. Their interpretations are often at variance with those of European scholars, but that point is not of very great importance from our present point of view. The Arya Samaj has been accused of being a fanatical and obscurantist movement, and is compared unfavourably in that respect with the broad-minded rationalism of the Brahmo Samaj. Enthusiasm bordering on fanaticism is a very good test of religious virility, and heat is more important than light for the spread of such movements. If, however, Aryans are dogmatic as regards the authority of Scripture, they are rationalists in its interpretation. If the exponents of their theology find things in the Vedas that are not there, they may perhaps be forgiven, since their general tendency is to discover in them an early expression of the highest ideals that mankind has at any time possessed. The general effect is a liberalising one, since it is the modern interpretation that matters, and not the ancient writings themselves. The Arya Samaj thus makes a double appeal—to the orthodox because they take their stand on the authority of the Vedas, which even the orthodox revere, though they may not understand them; to the liberal-minded, because the theology they have deduced is fairly rational and is not in obvious conflict with modern scientific notions or moral ideas.

Those Indians who are intelligently proud of their own venerable civilisation find in it the satisfaction of a national ideal which has not been imported ready-made from the West, but is consciously, intensely, and I fear sometimes aggressively, Indian. In this respect it has an undoubted advantage over movements like the Brahmo Samaj, which are too cosmopolitan in sympathy to arouse any national enthusiasm. Its ascetic tendency commends it to people of a

dour and stubborn character, and that is why, though it started in Bombay, its chief strength is in the Punjab and the United Provinces. The Punjabis, in particular, have many of the qualities which are connoted by the word "Ulsterman," and that is why a religion of this character appeals to them. Incidentally, the Punjabi character helps to account for the great success of the co-operative movement in that province in spite of the religious feuds and racial quarrels with which, like our own northern province in Ireland, it is normally distracted.

I do not propose to deal with the theology of the Arya Samaj in detail, although it must be borne constantly in mind that the religious aspect of the movement is, in theory at any rate, the fundamental one, with the qualification mentioned above. Directly and indirectly, this Samaj aims at social reform, and its methods and achievements are worthy of study.

With regard to caste, it did not declare open war against it, as the Brahmo Samaj did in its early career, but its procedure is more akin to that of the Prarthana Samaj. It seeks to disseminate a knowledge of the fact that the growth of caste in its present form came comparatively late in the history of Hinduism, that the Vedas do not countenance such a thing at all, that later on the caste names existed as a description of different avocations and of the appropriate character of those following them, but that at first promotion and degradation from one caste to another was quite a normal occurrence. This is the stage of the caste system which the Arya Samaj seeks to restore. In other words, it attempts to base the right to be called by the name of a particular caste on character and calling, and endeavours to abolish the hereditary principle altogether.

This attitude to caste is probably judicious. The Brahmo Samaj attempted to throw over caste altogether, but their total disregard of their countrymen's prejudices destroyed their influence and left them in an awkward position of isolation. In other words, they increased the evil instead of remedying it, since they became themselves practically a new caste. The policy of the Arya Samaj is to effect a reform of Hinduism and its caste system from within, and though progress may be slow, results will probably be more permanent and satisfactory.

The members of the Arya Samaj do not go out of their way to stir up trouble with their caste-fellows. Occasionally, however, they get outcasted; but in most cases they do not mind, though some of them allow themselves to be taken back after a nominal penance. Their attitude to the depressed classes of Hindu society is humanitarian, and with

regard to them proselytism and social reform go hand in hand.

Itinerant preachers are trained who go about among the villages preaching their gospel of social and religious reform. Low-caste men and outcastes who join their ranks are specially cared for; they are encouraged to learn to read, are "purified" by a religious ceremony if necessary, and everything possible is done to raise their social position. In addition, recent converts to Mahommedanism are reclaimed and admitted to their former castes. In this way it is sought to remove the reproach that while Mahommedanism and Christianity are ever ready to receive new converts, one can only become a Hindu by birth.

The Arya Samaj claims to be a "Catholic" religion. It considers that it has a message not only for the orthodox Hindu, but for the Mahommedan, the Sikh, and the Jain, and not only for India, but for the whole world. I understand that a number of former Mahommedan "moulvis," or religious teachers, and some Sikhs, have joined its ranks. In its attitude to the depressed classes it has entered the lists as a formidable rival of the Christian missionary. I do not know what degree of success attends their respective efforts where they are in direct opposition, but I have been told by an Indian connected with the Arya Samaj movement that where it has flourished converts to Christianity have dwindled. I was told by the same authority that the jealousy on the part of orthodox Hindus of the success of Christian missionaries among the lower classes gained for the Arya Samaj, when it undertook to counteract their efforts, a certain amount of sympathy in that quarter.

With regard to the ordinary programme of social reform—the abolition of early marriage, caste intermarriage, widow re-marriage, and the like—the Arya Samaj takes a leading part. Strict vegetarianism and "total abstinence" are also among its tenets, as, for that matter, they are among those of high-caste orthodox Hindus.

In matters of education the Arya Samaj has developed a new policy, as far as modern India is concerned. It is an attempt to restore the essential features of the ancient Hindu system of education, known as the "Gurukula" system. The most noteworthy of the educational institutions it supports is at Hardwar, at the foot of the Himalayas on the Upper Ganges. I had the pleasure of visiting another at a place called Santa Cruz, a few miles from Bombay; the latter has only recently been started, and has not yet fully developed. The idea is that the college should be placed, not in the midst of a busy centre of population, but, if possible, in the country or "jungle," where sanitation is likely to be better and the best conditions for study and meditation exist.

The ideal of education that is followed in these institutions is said to be the "equable and harmonious development of the faculties." The education given is thus threefold—physical, mental, and moral. The development of character is considered of paramount importance, and special emphasis is laid on training in the "Dharma" of the Vedic religion with a view to that object. The word "Dharma," it should be understood, means "morality" in the widest sense, *i.e.*, the kind of morality which is the outcome of a spiritual life both broad and deep.

Attention is paid to physical health and strength, not merely for their own sake, but because they are regarded as an indispensable condition of the highest intellectual and moral development. Food is plentiful but plain, simple clothing must be worn, and the boys are denied all the luxuries and many of the comforts of civilised life. This is said to exercise a healthy influence on the moral as well as the physical constitution.

The most noteworthy feature of the Gurukula system is that the boys are under the personal supervision of their teachers, not only during the classes, but throughout the day.

The "living-in" principle is regarded as absolutely essential. In this respect it resembles boarding schools at home and those of our universities, where the students are domiciled within the academic precincts. It is also in strong contrast with the method adopted in most of the Anglo-Indian university colleges. In the latter case moral education could not be imparted owing to the limited extent to which students came under academic supervision. Religious education was out of the question, owing to the variety of religions professed by students and the impossibility of providing for them all.

The Arya Samaj institutions get over both difficulties, since their students all profess the same religion, and owing to the possibility of adequate supervision a religious education which includes a training in character can be imparted.

According to the ancient Hindu ideal, the course of a man's life, in the case of Brahmans, at any rate, should be broken up into four different portions, each one of which should be devoted to a clearly defined human duty. From eight to twenty-five he was a student (Brahmacharya) at the private home of his Guru, or in a Gurukula establishment, run on larger lines—what we might call a university. During this time he acquired the training which should fit him to play his part in the outside world afterwards. At twenty-five he married, and till fifty was a family man, during which period his attention was occupied mainly by the affairs of this world. At fifty he was supposed to retire, perhaps with his wife, into

the jungle, where he taught and meditated. At this stage the "Vanaprastha," as he was called, supported himself by woodland fare, and lived in a little hut made of wood and leaves. At a fourth stage he gave up even these amenities of civilisation and became a "Parivajaka," or homeless, wandering monk. Such a man renounced the world altogether, might not take thought either for to-day or to-morrow, and if death approached might not attempt to ward it off. It was a social and religious duty to feed people like these, as it is to this day; and of course there are millions of religious beggars, many of whom are impostors, who derive a very good livelihood from the charity or simplicity of their fellow-countrymen.

The Arya Samaj educational institutions attempt to restore this ideal, at any rate so far as the first period is concerned. Primary, secondary, and university education are all departments of the same institution. The Brahmacharya stays there continuously till his education is finished. In this country school life is broken up periodically by vacations, but Brahmacharyas have no vacations in which they may return to the bosom of their families. They may only see their parents as visitors, and may not return home except for a brief visit under very special circumstances. Plato thought family life was destructive of the unity of the State, and in his ideal State would abolish it altogether. Those responsible for this feature of the Gurukula system are probably right in thinking that better citizens can be produced by the constant association of students of different castes with one another and their constant supervision by their teachers than if the salutary discipline thus imposed is broken into by periods of sojourn in the narrower atmosphere of the domestic circle. There are, of course, periods in the year when the normal course of study is suspended for a time; at these times excursions are organised to places of interest round about (third-class travelling is very cheap in India), and the boys, accompanied by their teachers, are given an opportunity of seeing their own country and widening their educational horizon.

As regards the actual subjects studied, paramount importance is attached to a thorough knowledge of the vernacular as a preliminary to the study of Sanskrit. This is easily intelligible on educational, national, and religious grounds.

English is not taught until the boy has at least mastered the elements of Sanskrit grammar. The sciences of the West are not neglected, but are given their true place in the curriculum. But the medium of education for teaching science and all other subjects is, up to a late stage, the vernacular. English is studied as a foreign language, and indeed from the linguistic point of view English is more foreign to an Indian

than German is to us. But, as I have said before, a sounder knowledge of English is probably acquired when it is placed in a position of due subordination to Sanskrit and the vernacular than when it is regarded as the be-all and end-all of education. I have referred to this subject at some length in another connection; from what has already been said, it will be seen that the Gurukula system of education has some very praiseworthy features and deserves the closer attention of all who are interested in Indian educational problems.

The Arya Samaj is technically non-political. That is to say, it regards the propagation of religious truth, and the social and moral regeneration that might be expected to follow from its acceptance, as of primary importance. So far from treating religious differences as something that may be sunk out of loyalty to the ideal of a common Indian nationality, in theory, at any rate, it considers that the only unity worth having is the unity that a common adherence to Aryan ideals would bring about. Political activity it officially regards as premature at present, since social and religious reform are a necessary condition of all real political progress, and much still remains to be done in those spheres. It is foolish to attempt even by constitutional means to lift the yoke of the stranger while the causes still remain that make that yoke inevitable, and perhaps even desirable.

"The causes of foreign rule in India," wrote Swami Dayananda, "are mutual feuds, differences in religion, want of purity in life, lack of education, child marriage, in which the contracting parties have no voice in the selection of their life-partners, indulgence in carnal gratification, untruthfulness and other evil habits, the neglect of the study of the Vedas, and other malpractices."

However much a society like the Arya Samaj might try to remain non-political in the technical sense, its scope is so wide and its activities so manifold that it is likely to interest itself in definite political questions. Individual Arya Samajists do take part in the Indian National Congress movement, and one of their number, Lala Lajpat Rai, was deported by Government on one occasion on account of the excessive political zeal he displayed. As a society, the Arya Samaj endeavours to spread the ideal of self-help and discourage the tendency to apply for Government assistance in any good work which is undertaken. There is a rather objectionable class of Indians who flatter Government officers in every possible way, and Arya Samajists, in order not to appear to have anything in common with such people, go to the opposite extreme and ignore Government and its officials altogether. For this and other reasons, the Society has come under suspicion as a political movement of a most dangerous

character. This is especially the case in the Punjab. I am not in a position to say whether the suspicion is justified or not. The term "politics" is used in such an artificial and restricted sense, both in India and at home, that a movement might be technically "non-political" and yet have the deepest political significance.

It is certain that a religious nationalism which derives its inspiration from a genuinely Indian source has greater potentialities for good or evil than a secular nationalism which owns the supremacy of Herbert Spencer in thought, admires the ideals of Burke and Macaulay in politics, and seeks to transplant the institutions which they adorned to the uncongenial soil of India.

Whether, the Arya Samaj movement will ultimately prove a blessing or a curse will depend as much on the efforts of Anglo-Indian statesmanship to understand it and appreciate the good influence it undoubtedly exercises in many directions, as on the tact, skill, and disinterested zeal of those to whom its leadership is entrusted. As regards its nationalism, the Arya Samaj is to the Indian National Congress very much what the Gaelic League in Ireland is to the Irish Parliamentary Party. The one emphasises the spiritual background of nationalism and admires genuinely Irish institutions. The other is a strictly "political" nationalism, and seems content with securing the establishment of a very English institution called a Parliament in College Green "with an executive responsible to it." The ideals of the first two, respectively, are in general more praiseworthy, but such movements are more likely to attract cranks and fanatics to their ranks; particularly in India, a Government whose own position is most delicate when religious questions are raised, must look with misgiving at a movement which is likely to raise such questions. However much it might sympathise with the attitude of the Arya Samaj to social reform, it could not actively assist its efforts without compromising the position of religious neutrality which it deems it necessary to hold. The whole question is beset with difficulties, but one may safely say that if the Arya Samaj grows much greater in strength and numerical importance, it will require the highest qualities of statesmanship to determine the attitude Government should maintain in its relations with it.

### **The Indian National Congress.**

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With regard to the Indian Congress movement, it is unnecessary to discuss its ideals and objects at any length, since my views on many of them must already be known by implication from what has been said before. Some remarks



made by one of the best and ablest of the Congress leaders will serve to illustrate the attitude of this party—as a party—to questions of social reform. Mr. Dadabhi Naoroji in his Presidential Address to the Congress, which met in Calcutta in 1886, said:—"How can this gathering of all classes discuss the social reforms needed in each individual class? What do any of us know of the internal home life, of the customs, traditions, feelings, prejudices of any class but our own? How could a gathering, a cosmopolitan gathering like this, discuss to any purpose the reforms needed in any one class? Only the members of that class can effectively deal with the reforms therein needed." The word "cosmopolitan" comes rather strangely from the lips of the spokesman of an Indian *National Congress*, as applied to the Congress itself. In admitting the incapacity of this embryonic Parliament to deal with problems of social reform, he admits its incapacity to deal with problems of first-rate importance which might well occupy the attention of Indian representative legislators in the making.

In reading through the speeches of the different Congress leaders, one is struck by the wholesale manner in which all the woes of India are attributed to an "autocratic and despotic system of administration," and the almost universal assumption that everything would be all right if the control of the affairs of India was only in the hands of representatives of the Indians themselves. In a few instances the grievances are substantial. I have elsewhere drawn attention to the consequences of a land revenue system unsuited to Indian character and climatic conditions, and there are many other real grievances which the Congress might ventilate, but prefers to ignore. But when the cost to India of the European administration to which that country owes its first experience of peaceful and incorruptible government, is reckoned simply as a dead loss and an economic drain which is bleeding the country to death, one is not impressed. Nor is one inclined to accept at its face value the contention that the gradual substitution of Indian for European agency in Government offices would be a considerable economy, since Indians are willing to do this work for less than what Europeans must be paid. The inequitable working of the legal procedure we have established, especially in civil matters, is never even referred to, though its consequences have been disastrous to large numbers of the common people. The omission will occasion no surprise when we remember the composition of the Indian National Congress. When Mr. Surendranath Banerji says, "I look upon the Permanent Settlement as my Magna Charta," bearing in mind the nature and consequences of that settlement, we begin to have a true measure of the democratic principles of this pseudo-democrat. One will

not find the false ideal of education which the British have established in India exposed in the speeches of its politicians, since they represent the false "nationalism" to which it has given birth—a nationalism which deserves the name only on *lucus a non lucendo* principles. Measures of constructive statesmanship like the Co-operative Societies Act owe everything to the intelligence and common sense of an "autocratic and despotic administration," but little or nothing to the political advocacy of those who claim to represent intelligent and educated India.

One cannot help feeling that the Indian National Congress lays altogether too much stress on the necessity for political changes in the direction of self-government which are not immediately urgent. It is not political emancipation, but moral, social, and spiritual emancipation which is required if India is to set out on the path of true nationhood. Keshab Chander Sen, in describing the social conditions of the Hindus of his day, used words which have still a certain application to those of the present generation. "Say from your own experience whether you are not hemmed in on all sides by a system of things which you cannot but hate and abhor, denounce and curse; whether the spiritual government under which you live is not despotism of the most galling and revolting type, oppressive to the body, injurious to the mind, and deadly to the soul! Are you not yoked to some horrid customs of which you feel ashamed, and which, to say the least, are a scandal to reason, and have you not often sighed and panted for immediate deliverance?" If the Indian National Congress cannot have a definite policy with regard to matters such as this, its purely political aims are not likely to succeed, and their success could only bring disaster in India.

The grievances which are ventilated by the Congress are very rarely felt by any large section of the Indian people. They are mostly the grievances of the educated classes. Hence they are open to the allegation that they do not represent India at all—they only represent themselves. Of real grievances which are felt by the common people there are plenty, and if the Congress really desires an effective programme, the successful advocacy of which would confer a real benefit on India, I would suggest that the part played by the civil courts in realising usurious contracts, the nature and extent of the "harauri" system, the conditions under which labour is recruited for the tea gardens and its treatment there, and questions of the like character might form a suitable subject for their investigations and, if necessary, fulminations. These are matters of economic reform which ought not to offend any religious susceptibilities, but unfortunately the classes which have profited most by the false policy which produced India's most pressing economic

problems are heavily represented in the Congress. Consequently, if it is debarred by respect for religious prejudice from collective action in the direction of social reform, it is equally incapable, on account of the vested interests it contains, from playing any part in economic reforms of a purely internal character.

We hear from it a good deal which is perhaps true about the way in which India's economic interests have been sacrificed to those of Great Britain, but not a word about many of the internal economic problems on which I have laid much stress in this report.

Individual members of the Indian National Congress often play a prominent part in questions of social reform. The Congress itself would be well advised to recognise more fully the importance of this work, even if it cannot undertake it, and to lessen the scope of its political ambitions until more hopeful social conditions have been established.

The ultimate ideal of political India is self-government within the Empire on the well-known Dominion lines. The organ of legislation and the controlling power in administration is to be a Parliament, probably with subordinate Legislatures for each of the provinces. Their present efforts are directed towards lessening the power of the administration and making the existing Councils of various kinds more "representative" and more authoritative. Our own "representative" institutions are taken as the ideal, and this naturally flatters the vanity of Englishmen, especially of Radical M.P.'s travelling in India.

From my point of view, "representative democracy" at home has proved itself utterly incapable, not only of taking measures to preserve national safety, but of providing an efficient and flexible system of internal administration, and so far from being able actively to promote the progress of the race, it has had the opposite effect, since it does not readily remove the legislative obstacles in its path.

I am not alone in thinking that the Government of India possesses certain most valuable qualities which Government at home lacks. Professor H. Stanley Jevons was recently appointed to the Chair of Economics in the University of Allahabad, and in his inaugural lecture expressed the following sentiments, which the people of the United Kingdom, and especially their political leaders, would do well to take to heart:—"I say without hesitation that a bureaucracy advised by scientific experts consulting with representatives of all classes and sections of the people, but not controlled by them, is the type of Government which will ensure the most safe and rapid progress."\*

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\* I am not so positive about this now.—January 1920.

I may refer to this subject again in connection with America, but for the present it will be sufficient to point out that political India would do well to realise the undoubted advantages of the system of government it now possesses instead of concentrating attention on the imaginary blessings that flow from "freedom" and "representative" institutions. In any changes that they may succeed in bringing about, if they sacrifice the former, the latter will prove but Dead Sea fruit, at any rate so far as the great mass of the Indian people is concerned.

### • Concluding remarks about India.

• It remains to consider what is the *raison d'être* of our rule in India, and on what conditions it should be abandoned. I am not aware that Government, at home or in India, has framed any definite policy on these matters. At home we have a variety of opinions, varying from the extreme imperialistic view that we must exploit India in every possible way in the interests of the United Kingdom till the end of time, if possible, to the more noble and idealistic sentiment that the highest function of Government in India is the education of its people in the principles of self-government, and that the proudest day in the annals of the British Empire will be the day on which India is admitted to the brotherhood of its self-governing Dominions, and the whole internal administration of the country committed into the hands of its inhabitants. The average Anglo-Indian official will show no sympathy with the first opinion, and will dismiss the second as a matter of purely academic speculation.

I think that no harm would result if the Government of India were to let it be known that it is quite prepared to consider the advisability of gradually resigning its functions when it is no longer in the best interests of India that it should retain them. It should make it clear, however, that in its opinion the great obstacle to the progress of India is not the accident of foreign rule, but those essential features in the character and social conditions of the Indian peoples which render it the only substitute for anarchy. It should realise to the full the enormous strength of its own moral position under present circumstances,\* and rely on that rather than on political cleverness and administrative efficiency as the justification for its rule. While it cannot actually produce the quality of fitness for self-government, it should do all in its power to encourage those spontaneous movements amongst the Indian peoples which tend, as a

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\* This was written prior to the Amritsar episode.

matter of fact, to develop that quality. In the case of the co-operative societies, Government has actually set on foot a movement whose ultimate success depends, of course, on the extent to which Indians of all classes identify themselves with it. Its primary object was to repair one of the most serious economic mistakes it had made in its treatment of the agricultural classes. But, as I have been at some pains to show, it is exercising a salutary influence far more widely than in the purely economic sphere. If successful, it cannot fail to produce the qualities making for good citizenship, and Government will do well to recognise this fact. Co-operative societies are rapidly becoming the basis of the social organisation of the country. Already their suitability as units of local self-government has been recognised. When India has been honeycombed with such societies and their federations Government may find it advisable to give them an even wider political significance. In this way, political will go hand in hand with social reorganisation, and a healthy "body politic" will be the natural outcome of a healthy condition of the social cells of which it is composed. This method of procedure is far more hopeful than the creation of artificial units like electoral constituencies returning "representatives" by popular election, and the gradual transfer of power to councils or assemblies thus constituted. As regards the exercise of administrative authority, the principle of individual responsibility should be retained at all costs, and a wide discretionary power should be left to local officers of Government. In this matter Indians should direct their attention towards the gradual increase in numbers of the Indian *personnel* in the administrative services, particularly the Indian Civil Service, until finally these Services are predominantly Indian. Attempts to lessen the power of executive officers by attaching advisory committees to them and such like will only impair their usefulness and introduce the abominable principle of divided responsibility. In matters of administration, if we desire efficiency, there is only one way of securing it, and that is to give each official an appropriate measure of authority and hold him responsible for its exercise. A large measure of personal authority is traditional in Indian administration, and is not incompatible either with genuine responsibility or with the healthy vitality of local self-governing units organised in village communities or co-operative societies. The institutions of "representative democracy" ought to be avoided if India would escape the dangers of anarchy on the one hand or stagnation on the other. Representative bodies composed largely of members elected by co-operative federations might, perhaps, be trusted with legislative power and a certain influence in administration, since their personal

interests would be identical with those of their constituents. This, however, is a development which we must look for in the future.

On the whole question of social reform Government might depart from its timorous position of neutrality, at any rate to the extent of letting it be known that it regards problems of social reform as of fundamental importance and their satisfactory solution as one of the chief conditions under which it would willingly surrender its responsibility for the welfare of India. Even at the risk of offending the orthodox, it might show that it sympathises with the cause of social reform and is willing to forward it by every means in its power, while realising fully that the extent to which it can profitably intervene is limited. In its dealings with the Arya Samaj, Government should make it clear that it approves of its avowed ideals as regards the importance it attaches to moral regeneration and social reform, and might adopt with advantage some of the educational principles it has developed in the schools of its foundation. It should be given no pretext for becoming a dangerous political movement; with mutual understanding and respect there is no reason why they should not co-operate in their different spheres in the common work of raising the social condition of India.

There is no country which presents a greater variety of problems of intensely human interest than India; there is none about which a little knowledge is more dangerous and dogmatic assertion more inadmissible, nor is there any which will yield a richer harvest to the patient and sympathetic student of human affairs.

With my present knowledge I have described a few of what I consider to be its leading features and ventured some opinions which fuller knowledge might have led me to modify. My aim has been to arouse curiosity rather than to satisfy it. If these pages serve to awaken a deeper interest in India's problems and a desire to study them from other and more authoritative sources, this portion of my report will have fulfilled a very useful function.

### **Java.**

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A week is all too short a time to spend in a delightful country like Java, as I discovered after I had been there.

I happened to arrive at my hotel in Batavia at noon; I might as well have arrived in the middle of the night. Everybody in Java takes a "siesta" at that time. My host, a very fine specimen of a Dutchman, went about most of the day in his pyjamas, and only dressed in the evening. My hostess preferred the loose comfort of a dressing-gown to the more conventional attire of a European lady.

I can cordially recommend Javanese hotels from the point of view of both comfort and economy. The food is excellent, and one very soon gets used to the extraordinary midday meal which is customary in that country. The foundation is a very plenteous helping of boiled rice; to that is added a great variety of odds and ends—vegetables, bits of meat, fish, spices, etc., etc. It is a good plan to refuse any more when one has already added about a dozen different ingredients. The whole is then mixed together and tasted with due deliberation. After getting over the initial shock the novice will continue, and even enjoy, this altogether unique meal, and perhaps, like *Oliver Twist*, ask for more.

A train journey to a place called Djokjakarta, in the interior, enabled me to obtain a superficial impression of the appearance of the country, of the life of its inhabitants, and, in addition, to visit some ancient temples, whose massive construction and elaborate ornamentation recall a period of Javanese history of which few other records are extant. The Javanese train by which I travelled was only equalled by American trains in point of discomfort. The shaking is so terrible that it is a work of art to pour out a cup of tea without pouring most of the contents of the teapot out through the window. Java, Ceylon, and Japan are the Emerald Isles of the East; their scenery is very refreshing to the eye that is tired looking at the burnt-up plains of India or China. The interior of Java is hilly and sometimes mountainous, and it can boast of a few live volcanoes. In fact, the whole geological structure of the island is volcanic. The scenery is rich and varied, and sometimes magnificent; the general impression that one gets is that of a land flowing with milk and honey. The inhabitants, in particular, seem to be comfortable and well fed, and to have little else to do except obey the primeval injunction about replenishing the earth. One rarely sees a full-grown woman who has not a child at the breast, and the population is increasing rapidly. This is not to be wondered at in view of the fertility of the soil and the general prosperity of the inhabitants under Dutch rule. What I did wonder at was that this island, having passed temporarily under British rule during the Napoleonic Wars, was ever surrendered to the Dutch again. The real reason, I believe, was that the British at home did not realise the value of the prize they were surrendering.

During the Middle Ages a wave of Buddhist, followed by one of Hindu, and afterwards by one of Mahommedan, civilisation seems to have come from India to Java. The ancient temples near Djokjakarta are partly Buddhist and partly Hindu in origin. Their existence points to a period of autocratic personal rule, since otherwise it is impossible to understand how a loosely organised people could have had

the energy and cohesion necessary for building structures which, in the engineering difficulties they presented, are comparable to the Pyramids of Egypt.

The present religion of the Javanese is nominally Mahomedan, but I could find no trace of any real religion of any kind amongst such a happy-go-lucky people.

My information about Java is partly derived from a long conversation with a very intelligent and well-informed Dutchman connected with the Official Tourist Bureau at Batavia, and to a greater extent from a book called "The Dutch in Java," by an American student of colonial Governments called Clive Day. It is said to be the only really reliable book in the English language on the subject of Java from the economic and administrative point of view, and as my readers can consult it for themselves, I shall only use it in order to point out certain instructive differences between the colonial policy of the Dutch in Java and the British in India.

In Java, as in India, the West first made the acquaintance of the East from purely commercial motives. Like the British East India Company, the Dutch East India Company began with the sole desire to trade, and finally found that it had to govern as well. Unlike the former, the latter was a financial failure, with the result that its career was rudely ended in 1798, when the Dutch Government became immediately responsible for policy and administration in the Dutch East Indies.

From 1811 to 1816 Java was under British rule, and during that time its Lieutenant-Governor, Thomas Stamford Raffles, a man of marked ability and extraordinary energy of character, made a vigorous attempt with very inadequate means to apply British ideals of administration and reform to a very demoralised people. Much of what he attempted was premature, but his best ideas have since been carried out, as opportunity offered, by the Dutch Colonial Government itself. The latter succeeded to the Imperial responsibilities of the Dutch East India Company, but for two generations it continued, in the spirit of the former *régime*, to subordinate policy to profit, and sought to exploit the country and its people in the interests of their rulers.

The method adopted was known as the "forced culture system," and its essential feature was that, in lieu of taxation, certain districts were compelled to cultivate certain crops for sale to the Government at a nominal sum, while the latter profited by their re-sale in the European market at the current price. The whole principle was economically and politically unsound, and in practice it led to gross oppression of the people and wholesale administrative corruption, while in the long run it was found to defeat its own object and did not secure to Government the income it had expected.



More liberal ideas began to prevail at home about 1848, and their influence in Java secured the abolition by 1870 of the institutions on which this system rested. Henceforth the Dutch Colonial Government confined itself to purely political functions.

One curious result of the forced culture system has been that the tendency towards the development of an individualist system of land tenure was checked, and communal ownership of land became almost universal. Government could only deal with village communities through their headmen, and the latter did their best to lessen their burdens by spreading them over as many shoulders as possible. Government officials interested in the system would naturally encourage a tendency which made its administration more easy. In any case, in modern Java the village community is a live institution, and the communal ownership of land is the rule rather than the exception. The whole administration of the island by the Dutch is ultimately based on the village community, and the village headmen are the last intermediaries between the Government and the people. As in India, a most important source of revenue is the land-tax, but in Java the tax is levied on the village, not on the individual villager. According to Mr. Dav, this system is far from ideal in theory and led to unfair distribution among the individual villagers in practice, but it has the supreme merit of practicability. It adapts native institutions to the exigencies of Western administration. The Dutch were conscious of their ignorance of the internal economy of Javanese society, and in this method of taxation they found something that would work in the dark. They realised that the essential condition of an individual principle of assessment was an accurate knowledge of the economic status of individual natives. After many unsuccessful attempts they recognised their inability to carry out a cadastral survey for the whole of Java at once. It is, however, being done piecemeal, and an individual assessment for land revenue will gradually be extended to the whole of Java as the completion of this survey makes it possible. If done in this way and based on accurate knowledge of the conditions to which it is applied, it may not have the unfortunate economic consequences that attended the wholesale introduction of this principle in many parts of India.

During the brief period of British rule, Raffles attempted the introduction of principles of taxation with whose results we are familiar in the case of India. He inclined first towards a settlement of some kind, temporary or permanent, with an intermediate class of landholders. He finally adopted the principle of individual assessment, already introduced in Madras, but in the complete absence of anything in

the nature of a cadastral survey, and in his almost complete ignorance of the actual conditions of Javanese society, the attempt was a failure. According to one Dutch official, the obligation to pay the tax in money, in cases where it was actually collected, placed the villagers in the power of the well-to-do amongst them, who "plied usury without mercy." Without doubt, Java would have repeated the experience of British India if British rule had been continued.

Raffles in formulating his plans was actuated by the most praiseworthy motives. He desired that Government should act directly with the individual cultivator, in order that a large portion of the revenue might not be absorbed by the intervention of a middleman class. He desired that the cultivators, on their part, should fall under the immediate "protecting influence of the Government." He rejected with scorn the proposal to have a village settlement, since he regarded this as a farming of the revenue through an intermediate class. In justice it must be admitted that he can be excused for not seeing much good in the village organisation of Java at that time, since the village headmen were most corrupt and oppressive in their methods and exactions. He failed, however, to recognise that whatever system he introduced must be vitiated by the character of the human instruments on which he depended for its administration, and that the village organisation, however defective its working in practice, was the most characteristic of all Javanese institutions, and one that could not safely be ignored in any system of taxation he might introduce. In the actual administration of the individual land-tax he sought to impose, he had to appoint the village headmen as petty officials for its collection. The effect of this was to exaggerate all the worst qualities of those functionaries, and by making them petty officials of a bureaucracy to destroy the *raison d'être* of their position as the representatives of the village community.

A student of history who is at all tinged with cynicism would find scope for the illustration of his philosophy in a comparison between the history of Java and that of India under European rule. The Dutch were content to exploit and afterwards to govern, and they have no *arrière pensée*, of which I am aware, about training the people in the principles of self-government, etc., etc. They have reaped their reward in a prosperous and apparently contented subject population. They have no Javanese "educated" class, since facilities for university education are non-existent in Java; any education that exists for the natives is of a distinctly utilitarian character, and there is room for all who qualify by that means in one or other of the occupations to which it leads. The very injustices which they deliberately inflicted

on the Javanese in the past have made it impossible to commit the far worse errors which, from the loftiest motives, we have committed in British India. The "culture" system was most oppressive, but it preserved and universalised the communal ownership of land, and thus helped to keep in existence the conditions in which an individual assessment for land-tax, with all its attendant possibilities of economic evil, has been impossible up to our own day.

The original policy of the British in India was to assimilate as far as possible Indian society, and Anglo-Indian methods of government to the English pattern. We have, on the whole, sought what we considered to be the real good of the people, but usually it was interpreted in this way. Latterly we have realised our mistake, but what has been done cannot be altogether undone. We introduced in Bengal a pseudo-English system of land tenure; we applied the economic ideas of the "Manchester School" to the village communities of Southern India; we applied British financial principles to the method of collecting the land revenue; we introduced English law as far as possible, and set up elaborate machinery for its administration; we have introduced the representative principle in legislation, and have declared our hope and expectation that it may be possible to extend its application considerably—in our more expansive moments we have asserted that our truest function is to train the Indians in the principles of self-government; we have based our educational system on British culture and Western learning, and all this we have done with the best possible intentions, but in many cases with most unsatisfactory consequences.

The Dutch have been content to take the Javanese as they found them. They have acquired a gradually increasing knowledge of the people and their institutions, and have known how to use the latter for the purposes of their administration without any objection on the ground that they are non-existent in Holland. In administration the general principle is supervision, not absolute control. The Dutch official does not interfere unnecessarily in the working of the native organisation. Litigation is rare, and one judge is enough for three administrative districts. The lawyer is kept at a distance, and the European barrister element is not, as in India, enthroned in the High Court to decide cases amongst a people of whose internal life he knows nothing. The Supreme Court of Batavia, unless I am misinformed, consists entirely of judges with Javanese experience appointed by the Colonial Government, and there is no appeal from its decisions to any Privy Council at Amsterdam. The Dutch govern Java primarily in their own interests, and secondarily in those of the Javanese themselves, and they seem to be at present fairly successful in both these objects. They have

no Royal proclamations conferring equality of privilege in the matter of public appointments on the Javanese, and I have not heard that they have any inconvenient theories that black and white are equal in the eye of the law to trouble them when it comes to their application in concrete cases.

The great difficulty with us has been that the ideals with which our rule in India is inspired are constantly being discovered to be inapplicable to the actual facts, and in our attempts to face the latter we leave ourselves open to the charge of hypocrisy on the ground that we are false to the former. In short, what we have done with the best motives in the world has led to the worst possible results, and by setting before us an impossible standard we have created far more problems than we have solved.

### China.

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If one makes one's first acquaintance with China at Hong-Kong and the day is wet, as it usually is there, some interesting points of difference between East and West will at once leap to the eyes. The Chinese rickshaw men and sedan-chair coolies wear raincoats made of straw, and very wide, umbrella-like straw hats. At home Irish people thatch their houses to keep out the rain, but the Chinese and Japanese of a certain class thatch themselves instead.

Even an amateur in naval strategy can see that Hong-Kong is naturally a place of considerable strength. It is an island rising up steeply from the sea on all sides, and absolutely commands the narrow strait into which flows the Pearl River, an important avenue of commerce.

Victoria, the harbour town, clings precariously to the base of the island on the western side, and much of it has been built on land reclaimed from the sea. In fact, the business of making more land to accommodate the increasing commercial necessities of the place is a very profitable occupation, and a company exists for that sole object. If you want to go along the level you take a rickshaw or a tram, but if you desire to go up the streets that lead to the "Peak" you must take a sedan-chair and experience the rocking motion that sometimes makes susceptible persons sea-sick. Ex-President Taft on one occasion arrived at Hong-Kong, and was conducted with all due solemnity into a sedan-chair, but when the coolies attempted to shoulder the burden the poles broke and the distinguished American was left sitting on the ground.

A funicular railway leads up to the Peak along a gradient which seems to be about one in two. As you go up, the

houses that are built on the side of the hill seem to lean inwards towards the rising ground behind them, but I suppose that is only an optical illusion. When travelling by this railway, one is inclined to wonder what it would be like if the rope broke, but I daresay even that contingency has been provided for.

Like all good tourists I visited Canton, and had a most interesting time there. I will not enlarge on its many well-known features, as these have been described by many others at length. The only thing I will say about it is that when I afterwards saw New York I was struck by an essential similarity between these two very different cities. The narrow alleys of Canton and the comparatively high houses give one exactly the same feeling of being cut off from sun and sky that one gets in New York from wider streets but very much higher houses. Both cities are alive with the varied activities of a swarming population, and one feels that the recording angel must have a busy time in writing down all their sayings and doings, whether good or bad.

The sensation-hunting tourist who goes to Canton in order to see the execution grounds where criminals are beheaded will fail in his quest, as the Chinese now shoot those who have been condemned to death. The various temples of Canton are apt to be disappointing if one has already seen the more famous shrines of India. I saw in one temple an image of Marco Polo as a Buddha along with dozens of other images of Buddhas. I have not heard whether a similar honour has been conferred on subsequent travellers to that country, but we cannot all expect to achieve the fame of Marco Polo.

The really interesting places in Canton are the curio shops, especially those of the ivory, lacquer, and kingfisher's feather workers. The latter term requires some explanation. The Chinese make most beautiful brooches and other ornaments by gluing on the surface of a metal object of the particular structure desired tiny portions of kingfisher's feathers so as to form a variegated pattern. The finished product looks like enamel work, and you would never guess what it really consists of. The collector of curios will find a plentiful variety of the beautiful products of patient industry for sale in Canton at reasonable prices, and will do well to make large purchases there.

When at Canton I made the acquaintance of the Canton Christian College, and its very energetic and obliging President and staff. Americans of this kind are very convenient people for the Albert Kahn traveller to meet, as they always seem to know exactly what you want, and you do not have to ask questions, but only to listen. The College is a "going" concern, and is successful in both its missionary and educational objects. In addition, the students appreciate what is

being done for them, and are active and self-sacrificing in forwarding its interests in every possible way.

This was not the only institution of the kind I came across in China, but I take this opportunity of referring here briefly to the whole missionary question as it affects China. The native religions of the Chinese are described as follows in the "China Year Book" for 1914:—"It is customary to speak of the religions of China as three in number—Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism. Probably a more correct statement of the facts would be that China, apart from the monastical profession of Buddhism, merely recognises one religion based on a belief in the animation of the universe with good and evil spirits, which finds expression, as one writer has said, 'in countless acts of propitiation or exorcism all designed to preserve or restore the proper balance of power between good and evil,' and that in this religion are included: (1) *ancestor-worship*—'the very core of the religious and social life of the people' (J. J. M. de Groot, Ph.D.); (2) Confucianism—a moral code rather than a form of worship; (3) Taoism; and (4) Buddhism, the last two supplying the forms of ritual or outward observances without calling for any corresponding degree of religious faith.

"Ancestor-worship enters into the life of the Chinese as a religion in a more real form than any other system, the spirits of the ancestors being worshipped, and attempts to merit their goodwill and kindly offices being made more conscientiously than in the dealings with the numerous deities incorporated with Taoism and Buddhism. The worship of ancestors is a natural corollary to Confucianism, though antecedent to it."

Christian missionaries regard Confucianism as an ally rather than as an enemy, and attempt to build on the foundations which it provides, but one cannot help wondering whether Christianity would commend itself to an ancestor-worshipping people if the doctrine of eternal punishment were given the same prominence that it sometimes has in the West.

Apart from ancestor-worship, which is not a religion in the fullest sense, the spiritual resources of China appear to be exhausted. The Chinese are conscious of the fact, and there is a genuine demand for Christian teaching. They seem to imagine sometimes that if China accepts the religion of the West they will be able to emulate the triumphs of Western civilisation in its secular aspects. The recent European conflict has caused some furious thinking among the Chinese, and the missionaries have had some difficulty in making them understand that the "golden rule" does not apply to international relations, unless perhaps, in a strictly literal sense.

In any case, China is now deriving from Western sources the spiritual impulse which is necessary for the energising of her national life. The Japanese are an intensely mundane people and have plenty of vitality—individually and as a nation. Consequently, they do not feel the need of the motive power of a new religion. India has a great inheritance of religious thought and a spiritual outlook which is peculiarly her own. In fact, one might say that Japan corresponds to the stony ground of the parable, India to the ground that was rank with weeds, while China is the good ground. One might prophesy, therefore, that Christianity will make a much more rapid and permanent conquest of China than of Japan or India.

Christianity seems to find itself in its mission work, and to be more truly itself than when it is expressed in the creed-bound faiths of different denominations at home. In China, at any rate, its motto is "*Homo sum humani nihil a me alienum puto.*" It does not concern itself solely with the future abode of the souls of its adherents, but brings the uplifting principles of Christian teaching to bear on every aspect of human life and society. Its missionaries are not mere preachers. They are the organisers of a new and a better social order. Hospitals, schools, and colleges are as characteristic of missionary activity in China as churches, and the whole seems to be excellently co-ordinated with a view to the ultimate object of making Christians and developing Christian character. The efforts that they make in all these directions are very much appreciated by the native authorities, and the best friends of China, both European and native, Christian and non-Christian, consider that the Christian movement takes a very high place among the forces that are making for the regeneration of modern China.

Owing to the comparatively undeveloped state of communications in China, and the length of time it takes to get from place to place, the traveller is apt to find that even to obtain a very superficial acquaintance with the country would occupy several months. The present writer proceeded from Hong-Kong to Shanghai by the Pacific Mail steamer "*Korea.*" The latter place he treated as his base for a number of days, but did not find much to interest him in its immediate precincts. It was the first place in which he saw the German flag flying, and the first place in the East where European girls seemed to him to have any complexion—except what they buy in the chemist's shop.

A railway runs from Shanghai to Nanking along the Yang-Tse River. Thither I went, and among other places visited the local missionary college. When there I met an American whose acquaintance I had made at a hotel in Benares. I dare say we mutually remarked on the smallness

of the world after all. Anyhow, we went about together and saw the old examination hall of the city. It was built to accommodate thousands of candidates, and consisted of a central watch-tower, on which, I suppose, the chief superintendent stayed. Radiating from this point ran several long, double rows of little cells—one for each candidate—with a common passage running down the middle of each double row. The Chinese took very effective measures to prevent students copying from one another, but I believe, such is the weakness of human nature, other malpractices were common nevertheless. The cells were in a very dilapidated condition, and rank weeds grew where formerly anxious candidates passed along or wrote. The whole system of government and education with which these institutions were identified has passed away, and the modern Colleges of China, with their spacious and well-fitted lecture-rooms, compare favourably with the more primitive arrangements of some of our own older universities.

I dare say most people know that under the former *régime* passing an examination was the only recognised method of obtaining an official position. Education held a high place in Chinese esteem; in fact, it was the only country with which I am acquainted in which Plato's theory that government should be in the hands of the wise was systematically applied. Unfortunately, the system of education on which it was based left much to be desired, and was calculated to develop the memory at the expense of the intellect. Towards the end of the Manchu dynasty Government became almost inconceivably corrupt, and the educational qualification was no longer the one thing needful, but Government offices were bought and sold in a most shameless fashion, and the oppressions and exactions of a venal bureaucracy approached the limit set by the danger of rebellion, and sometimes passed it.

It may seem a strange thing to assert after all this that the Chinese people are intensely and genuinely democratic. It is nevertheless true, and that is one of the reasons why the country is usually in a condition of anarchy. Apart from foreign aggression, other reasons why China finds it so difficult to develop internal cohesion and national strength may be dismissed briefly. The immense size of the country and the difficulty of communication have developed a spirit of local particularism which makes the higher organisation of the country difficult, if not impossible. Communications, however, are being improved under the control, for the most part, of foreign capital. China's teeming population, and the dissipation of her resources under the Manchu *régime*, add to the difficulty of providing a modern system of education for all her children of school-going age. The



traditions of the former educational system are still strong, and its worst features will not be easily eradicated.

That the spirit of the Chinese is thoroughly democratic is seen most clearly in the whole theory underlying the position of the emperors of various dynasties, and in their relations with the people whom they governed. The country has long been divided into provinces, the Imperial power descending through a hierarchy of officials, central and provincial. But the lowest of these come into contact not so much with individual Chinamen as with villages consisting of families of Chinamen. The family was the lowest social unit, and the village the lowest political unit, and the latter was a little republic with its own internal life and social economy; like Ulster, its sole desire, so far as the central government was concerned, was to be let alone. The power of the Emperor, absolute in theory, was limited in fact by the force of inertia of the village communities. Not only agriculturists were organised, but every class of trader and artisan belonged to his respective guild. Even beggars have their guilds, and a beggar may not hope to practise his profession unless he secures admission to one! Trade Unions, and the spirit of Trade Unionism, thus exist in China. I heard a very good story which, if true, illustrates the democratic spirit of the Chinese and also their strong common sense. A Trade Union of sorts desired an increase of wages for its members; nothing so vulgar or Western as a strike was contemplated, but instead the members invited their employer to a dinner, an invitation which he accepted as a matter of course. After he had well feasted, it was politely suggested to him that an increased contribution to their material welfare in the form of extra wages would be appreciated by his employees. In the circumstances he could not refuse without "losing face"—a thing that no self-respecting Chinaman will do. Thus the whole matter was amicably settled. I commend this procedure to British Trade Union leaders.

The Chinese Emperor formerly, like the Japanese Emperor to this day, was styled Son of Heaven, and reigned as the direct representative of heaven on earth. For centuries during the most turbulent period of Japanese history the Emperor was in leading-strings, but—a not unusual phenomenon—his sanctity increased as his power diminished. It was probably this circumstance that preserved the continuity of the Japanese dynasty. The fact that the same dynasty still bears sway in Japan that is associated with the earliest and purely mythological period of her history is of no small importance. The cumulative increase in its prestige enables it to serve as the centre and symbol of national unity, and adds to its authority now that it has once more taken up the functions of civil government. The spirit of the Japanese is

aristocratic, or rather "timocratic," and the qualities of loyalty and discipline, which are valuable in peace but essential in war, are more akin to that spirit than they are to the democratic.

The sanction of the Chinese Emperor's rule was in theory a religious one, but in practice it rested on the consent of the governed. If his rule was oppressive and a national leader headed a successful rebellion against it, he became, *ipso facto*, Emperor and Son of Heaven. The favour of heaven was thus the reward of successful rebellion, or rather the fact that the rebellion was successful was proof positive in the Chinese view that the favour of heaven had been bestowed on it. To that extent "Treason never prospered" in China.

In the long history of China many different dynasties have held sway, and usually a new dynasty was ushered in by a bloody revolution. However creditable this may be to the democratic spirit of the Chinese, there is no denying the fact that the frequent change of dynasty has prevented any of them from gathering round it the traditional devotion of a united and loyal people. The factor which has contributed so much to the national unity of the Japanese is thus totally absent in the case of China.

That China should have recently established a republic is thus not so remarkable as it appears at first sight. It is too early yet to pass any judgment on its achievements or prospects, but in the view of those best qualified to form an opinion the Chinese possessed in the late Yuan Shi-Kai a man of great strength of character, considerable ability, and conspicuous integrity. His death is an unparalleled calamity for the people of that country.

The two besetting sins of political democracy are the tendency to stagnation on the one hand and anarchy on the other. The Chinese democracy was inert for many centuries. In the events that led up to the foundation of the republic, and in the subsequent history of the republic itself, the desire for progress, or at all events for change, is very manifest. But if the ever-present danger of anarchy was to be avoided it was necessary that this desire should be guided and controlled by a firm directing will. Yuan Shi-Kai realised this necessity, and attempted to play that part. As a consequence he came under the suspicion in certain quarters of caring more for personal advancement than for national welfare. But from what I can gather, I incline to the view that if Yuan Shi-Kai aimed at Royal or Imperial power, he did so because he felt that he must hold such a position in order to carry out the duty he had set before him more effectively, and that his sole motive throughout was the advancement of the national well-being.

What will happen now that he is gone it is impossible to say. The forces of anarchy and the tendencies to dissension are still very strong. The Cantonese dislike the Manchus, and their hot southern temperament was restive under the rule of Yuan Shi-Kai. Nearly half the country was recently in a state of open rebellion. There is in China, as in India, a considerable section of educated men who have imbibed in Europe or America intoxicating ideas about popular freedom and popular government. Yuan Shi-Kai made short work of the Parliament of the new republic, although it had shown its ability to emulate the Mother of Parliaments by voting itself salaries, and his action in this matter must have aroused resentment in many quarters. Certainly the ideal of representative government does not lack advocates in China.\*

The circumstances of China and of India are so widely different that an elaborate comparison between them would scarcely be instructive. The points of difference between Indians and Chinamen impress one far more than any resemblances that there may be in their respective characters. The caste system as it is known in India is non-existent in China, and to that extent there is one obstacle the less in the way of the progress of the latter country. China is free, in theory at least, and India is a subject country. If national freedom be an essential condition of social and political progress, China is better off than India.

\*It might appear from the above that the present writer is out of sympathy with democratic ideals. On the contrary, I sympathise most heartily with the ideal of government by all in the interests of all, but I have observed that in most cases where so-called democracy exists the practical result is misgovernment of the many in the interests of the few. Unless the economic and social structure of a community is democratic and the spirit of liberty, equality and fraternity animates the hearts of its members, the machinery of democratic government will produce very undemocratic consequences.

In the case of China it matters little what the central government is like, so long as the conditions of social and economic progress are maintained, and if the machinery of political democracy would prejudice these more than some other possible form of government, its introduction at this stage would be to that extent undesirable.

The spirit of liberty and equality is strongly characteristic of the Chinese. That of fraternity may be expected to develop. The immediate task of China is to build the fabric of a self-conscious nationhood out of the village communities and the guilds associations which are the most essential and permanent elements in the common life of her people.

At some stage or other the strangle hold of foreign commercial interests will have to be released from her "body economic." Then and not till then will China be free among the nations of the world: and let us hope by that time China economically and politically will be an outstanding example of a sound democratic soul in a sound democratic body.

Meanwhile the motto for China must be "Educate that you may be free."

I have heard it seriously suggested that if China succeeds in emulating the example of Japan she may become a danger to the peace of the world. I am inclined altogether to disallow the reality of the "Yellow Peril" so far as China at least is concerned; in the first place, China is the most genuinely and honestly peace-loving country with which I am acquainted. The sworded class was held in very low estimation in China as compared with the intellectual class, and it is only under external pressure and from a growing realisation that, so far as the Great Powers of the world (mostly Christian nations) are concerned, right is nothing unless backed up by might, that she has taken to beating her ploughshares to swords. The absence of the spirit of discipline makes the problem of securing military and naval efficiency immensely difficult, in spite of the fact that the raw material of her armies is excellent, and leaves nothing to be desired in point of physique or personal courage.

The "Yellow Peril" might have been a greater reality if Japan had pursued a different policy after the Russo-Japanese War. The Chinese were naturally proud of the victory of their yellow neighbours, and if Japan had played the part of big brother to China she would have won her gratitude, and the latter country would gladly have entered on the path of progress as her willing pupil and potential ally. Instead of this, Japan simply succeeded to the position of Russia in Southern Manchuria, and her attitude to China was precisely the same as that of the Western nations generally. The matter came to a head in connection with the recent operations in the Shantung Peninsula, when Japan drove out the Germans on the understanding that the reconquered territory would be handed over to China, and then simply installed herself in their place; subsequently, in a spirit worthy of Germany, but unworthy of Japan, she presented an ultimatum to China making demands which China could not concede consistently with her dignity as a sovereign State. War was only averted by inches, but a very bitter feeling was left in the minds of the Chinese. Japanese goods were boycotted for a time, and I understand some Chinese shopkeepers in Java even went so far as to make a public bonfire of whatever Japanese goods they had in stock. I wonder how many British shopkeepers burnt all the German goods they had in stock when the recent war broke out.

A national "salvation" fund was also organised, and contributed to very generously and enthusiastically by Chinese both at home and abroad. The general feeling among the Chinese, so far as I could estimate it, was that they could have eaten the Japanese raw. The sympathy of British residents in the Far East was altogether on the side of the Chinese.

The chief obstacle to Chinese national development is the ambition of Japan. Of course, the situation will be affected by the general balance of power amongst the nations of the world after the war, but in the meanwhile, and subsequently, as far as China and Japan themselves are concerned, it is really a race between the spirit of reform in China and the spirit of aggression in Japan. As a friend of China who also admires the many excellent qualities of her island neighbour, I must say that I hope the former will win. Certainly a reorganised and reformed independent Chinese nation would be a great gain to civilisation and an added element of stability in human society.

### Japan.

The ink was scarcely dry on what I wrote last night about China when it became known that Japan and Russia had concluded a formal treaty of defensive alliance. I am not conversant with the aims of Russia's present\* Far Eastern policy, but the concluding sentence of an editorial in a leading Irish paper *à propos* of this treaty seems to me to involve a false conception of the international position in that part of the world. "Nothing could be better calculated to preserve the lasting peace of the Far East than this instrument, which definitely excludes from that part of the world the prime agent of international unrest." I trust these sentiments are shared by the Foreign Offices of Peking and Washington. At the risk of appearing an alarmist, and in the hope that what I say will not be justified by the event, I must express the opinion that recent events indicate that the international position in the Far East is more likely to be upset by the ambition of Japan than by the no longer existent power of Germany. American and Chinese interests are here closely identified. In the event of a quarrel, the blow would fall with crushing force on a weak and helpless China, and the greater part of the victors' spoils would probably come from that country.

America, too, is in a hopeless state of military unpreparedness, though the balance of naval power is still probably in her favour as compared with Japan. If the latter were reversed, or if the destruction of the Panama Canal suddenly halved the naval strength that America could concentrate on the Pacific Coast at a moment's notice, an invasion of the exposed littoral would become not only practical, but easy. The danger is dimly felt at Washington and more acutely in California, but the fundamental error

of the present foreign policy of the U.S.A. is that she is losing a magnificent opportunity for making her naval and military forces strong and efficient with a view to possible developments hereafter. She will probably regret it later on, but the quality of forethought is not strongly characteristic of democratic statesmanship, and the leader who asks such a people to surrender an immediate good in order to secure a greater but more remote one is riding for a fall.\*

Prior to leaving Shanghai I was rejoined by my better half, who had spent the intervening time in Australia.

We made our first acquaintance with Japan at Nagasaki, where we went ashore in the evening accompanied by a fellow-countryman whose acquaintance we had made on the boat. Nagasaki is a typically Japanese town surrounded by typically Japanese country. Everything is in miniature—the people, the houses, the streets. Even the hills of a few hundred feet are not hills at all, but miniature mountains in appearance. Nagasaki is a paradise for the curio-hunter whose pockets are well lined. Its characteristic products in this line are tortoiseshell objects and objects made of horn, which are indistinguishable to the non-expert in appearance and equally so in price.

The rickshaw men in Singapore speak an unknown tongue, and are guided in the right direction by their passengers by means of signs and gesticulations. In Japan they are human beings, and expect to be treated as such. They have visiting cards printed in English and Japanese, which they present to their patrons on the slightest inducement. Our Irish friend, whose headquarters in the East are in Singapore, was so dumbfounded on being presented with a visiting card by his rickshaw man that in making a bee-line for the launch he walked inadvertently into the harbour. Our alarm gave place to amusement when we found that the point which he had chosen for his immersion was a landing-place for small boats, so that actually he was walking down a series of steps covered by water.

We got off the boat at Kobe, which is a seaport town of very Westernised appearance, and made straight for Kyoto, the ancient capital of Japan, and in many respects the most characteristic city of that country.

Japan in general, and Kyoto in particular, have been written about by many able writers, and I do not feel called on to give an exhaustive account of my experiences and impressions. The curious reader desirous of information from authoritative sources will do well to consult the works of men like Lafcadio Hearn, Nitobe, and Yokakura.

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\* The danger referred to has been averted by the folly of Germany's submarine policy (January, 1920).

I feel a certain diffidence in writing about Japan after a visit of only six weeks' duration, for, in fact, it is a very "elusive" country and one about which superficial judgments are apt to be misleading. It was necessary for me to read widely in order to discover the true interpretation of phenomena of Japanese life that at first sight appeared to be of no particular interest.

Thus Japanese women, when seen in public, are a great disappointment. They have most waxen and expressionless features, and they hobble along on the wooden platforms that serve the purpose of shoes without either grace or beauty. In the house, however, they become quite animated and gay—in fact, they are different beings altogether. To explain this apparently simple phenomenon one must go deep into Japanese history, and understand the principles on which Japanese society is built. In the civil wars of mediaeval times a sudden death was what any Japanese—man, woman, or child—might not unreasonably look forward to. It was a point of honour to accept the most unexpected and cruel misfortune, not only with resignation, but actually with an outward expression of cheerful acquiescence. A certain sect of Buddhism reinforced this tendency with its religious teaching, and in the disturbed conditions of the time its doctrine of stoical indifference to all human vicissitudes made an irresistible appeal to the Japanese mind.

The display of emotion in public, or in private before other than very intimate friends, was considered very "bad form," and Japanese women in particular have learnt through centuries of habituation to use their features in public as a veil rather than an index for their feelings. In the patriarchal conditions of Japanese society the natural instinct of a Japanese woman is to reserve her charms for the home, and not to show herself off to the greatest advantage in public. Hence the dull and listless expression which is so surprising to the tourist.

Certain remarks of Nitobe, in his book on Bushido, *a propos* of a somewhat kindred subject, will further illustrate my point.

"I have noticed a rather superficial notion prevailing among half-informed foreigners that because the common Japanese expression for one's wife is 'my rustic wife' and the like, she is despised and held in little esteem. When it is told that such phrases as 'my foolish father,' 'my swinish son,' 'my awkward self,' etc., are in current use, is not the answer clear enough?

"To me it seems that our idea of marital union goes in some ways further than the so-called Christian. 'Man and

woman shall be one flesh.' The individualism of the Anglo-Saxon cannot let go of the idea that husband and wife are two persons; hence when they disagree their separate *rights* are recognised, and when they agree they exhaust their vocabulary in all sorts of silly pet-names and nonsensical blandishments. It sounds highly irrational to our ears when a husband or wife speaks to a third party of his other half—better or worse—as being lovely, bright, kind, and what not. Is it good taste to speak of one's self as 'my bright self,' 'my lovely disposition,' and so forth? We think praising one's own wife or one's own husband is praising a part of one's own self, and self-praise is regarded, to say the least, as bad taste among us—and, I hope, among Christian nations too!"

Having said so much, I propose to touch lightly on certain aspects of Japan about which it is safe to speak without a prolonged acquaintance with the country and its people.

Railway travelling is comfortable, convenient, and cheap. The whole management of the railways, which are now mostly owned by the State, strikes one as efficient, and everything is done to meet the convenience of the tourist. The country is very hilly and well watered, and the Japanese seem to avail themselves, wherever possible, of water-power for making electricity.

Kyoto nestles snugly in a comfortably sized valley surrounded on all sides by hills of varying height. Mount Hiei bounds the valley on the north-east, and beyond that, at a very much higher level than Kyoto, lies a considerable expanse of water called Lake Biwa. It was felt to be very desirable that the waters of that lake should be made available in Kyoto for power and other purposes, but the problem was how to get them there, seeing that a mountain range of about 2,000 ft. high lay between. The solution took the form of a tunnel, or rather three tunnels, altogether about 2 miles long, made right through the heart of the mountain. At a cost of a few pence we travelled in a Japanese boat along this extraordinary canal, and the sensation when we were in the tunnel was certainly most weird. A light is carried at the prow of the boat, and the boatman confined his attention to steering, as the waters flow constantly in the direction in which we were going—towards Kyoto. A rope seemed to run along the side of the canal to which upward-bound boats keep, and occasionally we saw dimly the half-naked figure of a perspiring Japanese coolie pulling his boat upwards by means of this rope. This canal, both in its conception and its construction, is a remarkable tribute to the enterprise of the Japanese.

Thanks doubtless to this feat of engineering skill, the electric tram service of Kyoto leaves nothing to be desired in



point of comfort, convenience, or cheapness, while electric light is universal, not only in Kyoto itself, but in the cottages of the surrounding country-side.

As the season of the year was propitious, we decided to climb Mount Fuji. In view of our experiences at Kyoto we were somewhat surprised to find that a very primitive service of horse trams is still used for conveying passengers from Gotemba to Subashiri, at which point the ascent is usually begun. The tram line is a single one, and there did not seem to be any points or sidings anywhere, so, needless to say, we were rather alarmed when we met another tram coming rapidly down to meet us. The conductor, however, was equal to the occasion. With a quick movement of his arm he jerked our tram off the lines, and then the horse pulled it clear altogether. The other tram passed, and a somewhat similar operation placed our tram on the line once more. I have rather vague recollections of the ascent of Mount Fuji—a height of 12,365 ft. We spent a night in a Japanese inn, and got away the following morning, accompanied by a vigorous little guide who carried our belongings without apparent effort, though after a time it was as much as we could do to carry ourselves. At the foot of the mountain the heat was stifling, but when we got up to the eighth station, where we rested for the night, the thermometer had fallen to the neighbourhood of freezing-point, and I distinctly remember that, when I sat down to rest, the difference in temperature reacted unfavourably on my internal arrangements. We got up early the following morning in order to see the sun rise and continue the ascent. The sun did not rise as far as we were concerned, but the cloud effect was most wonderful. I should add that we were not alone in this pilgrimage, but dozens of Japanese of all ages and both sexes were making the ascent at the same time. This they do partly from religious motives. Fuji is a sacred mountain and is connected with the national religion of Shinto. The æsthetic appreciation of scenery is a strongly marked feature of Japanese character, and is intimately connected with their religion. There appear to be no water-tight compartments in Japanese mentality, but everything in it blends into one harmonious whole.

When we got to the very top we were so tired that we spent most of our time at the rest house, and did not walk all round the crater, though we satisfied our curiosity by looking at it. It was not, as I had half expected, a continuous hole leading right through to the centre of the earth, but its sides had fallen in, and it looked just like a huge disused quarry. Japanese schoolboys are fond of airing their English, and when we were at the top one such came up to Mrs. Johnston, made a sweeping bow, and said, "Please, madam,

may I have the honour to put you in my camera?" The permission was readily granted, and at our request he sent us copies some time afterwards—and a postcard in which he expressed himself as follows:—

"Dear Sir,

"For I have been on a journey during many day after I met you, excuse me that I could not sooner send you your photo which I had taken on the top of Mt. Fuji. Though I could not get it handsomely. I complete it to-day, so I send you the photograph.

"Yours truly,

"Japanese boy,

"MUREYAM KAMIYA."

The journey down had trials of its own, though it was not so bad while the cinders were deep, and we slid two paces for one that we walked. When in Japan I succeeded in learning enough Japanese to be able to get about even where people knew no English—and English is much less spoken in Japan than one would expect. On that day the Japanese for "Is the honourable wife tired?" was learnt by both of us in a most thorough manner. At intervals our sturdy guide looked at me and asked, "Okusan tsakarimashita ka?" and the invariable answer was given, "Sukoshi," that is to say, "a little." Whereupon he pulled large bunches of wild strawberries or did some other thoughtful little act to lessen for her the burden and heat of the day. I think we both remember that guide with gratitude, though he crossed our path but once in life, and will probably never cross it again.

Various writers have explained the important part that "Bushido," literally "Military-Knight-Ways," plays in the Japanese national character. A rough idea of the state of society in which it grew up would be given if we said that it was a kind of combination of the feudalism of mediaeval England and the family-sept-clan institutions of the Highlanders or the ancient Irish. If we add that the different elements in this society fought against each other as much as did the mediaeval barons of England and the ancient clans of Ireland or Scotland; we shall probably not be far from the truth. Devotion to a personal superior, whether head of a family or of a clan, or leader of a faction, was the rule of this society, and this devotion knew absolutely no bounds. Not only would individuals sacrifice themselves for their lord, but they cheerfully sacrificed their children, and even the honour of their wives and daughters, if doing so would forward his cause in any way. Wives and daughters freely acquiesced, and neither father, wife, nor daughter considered that there was anything wrong about such a line of conduct if adopted

in the interests of their liege lord, but all alike regarded it as the only possible course open to them. To this day Japanese women will sell themselves in the interests of their families, and their conduct is not reprobated by society if it has this justification. It does not follow that the Japanese are a peculiarly immoral people—in point of fact they are not—but rather that the instinct to sacrifice the individual to the good of the family or society is strongly developed in Japan.

In mediaeval Japan, though the instinct of loyalty was strong, it was narrow; it took the form of personal devotion to the leader of one of a number of warring factions, and its existence only helped to perpetuate anarchy and complicate the problem of national union. The foundations of stable government were laid during the three centuries of the Tokugawa Shogunate—a military rule which ceased at the time of the "Restoration," about fifty years ago. The Mikado now rules in fact as well as in name, and his prestige is not dimmed by the long period in which his ancestors were *rois fainéants*.

His person was always sacred; in fact, he is an incarnate god in the Japanese view, but, in addition, the loyal devotion which formerly was called forth by a military chieftain, and was usually proved in civil strife, is now lavished on the Japanese nation, as symbolised in its divine ruler, and contributes very materially to national unity and strength. I do not know how far the growth of industrialism in modern Japan has undermined this feeling, but I feel I am right in saying that the Japanese people is more intensely patriotic than any other nation on earth.

When the sleep of ages had been broken and the Japanese had decided to enter into the society of modern nations, the princes and nobles of Japan, in the interests of national progress and efficiency, willingly surrendered their feudal privileges. I am not aware of any Western country in which the corresponding class has made such a voluntary surrender of similar privileges, but this is only one of many examples of the spirit of self-sacrifice and loyalty which is characteristic of all classes in that country where the interests of "Dai Nippon" (Great Japan) are concerned.

The qualities of Japanese citizenship may be seen in the works of peace as well as in the trials of war. The Japanese outlook on life is practical, and the logic of Japanese thinking is the logic that leads to decisive and consistent action.

They have adopted many institutions and inventions of various kinds from Western Europe, but this does not argue any mental or national inferiority on their part. The Japanese are, paradoxical as it may seem, the most original of imitators. They adopted Buddhism from China through

the medium of Korea, they took over Chinese writing, Chinese ethics, and a Chinese system of local administration, but all the time they remained essentially Japanese, and the new matter was unconsciously so worked up and modified that it very soon became part and parcel of the national life. More accurately speaking, the Japanese are not imitators, but rather assimilators, and the same holds good with reference to their recent borrowings from the West. After all, most of the triumphs of Western civilisation are material triumphs, and it does not involve the admission of moral or spiritual inferiority deliberately to appropriate these, nor does their existence in Japan make the Japanese spirit any less Japanese. However, the industrialism of the West, if adopted in the spirit as well as the outward form, will involve a profound modification of social conditions in Japan, and it will be interesting to see whether that country will simply repeat our experience of the economic problems arising out of it or whether they will have a new and peculiarly Japanese form.

When Japan decided to set her house in order she had the advantage that all new business undertakings have, namely, that they can instal the most up-to-date plant in each department, from whatever source it may be derived. Thus the Japanese organised their navy on the pattern of the British and their army on that of the German. Their modern system of law and legal procedure seems to have owed much to the French, while their administrative institutions are formed partly on French and partly on German analogies, and America has contributed something to their educational system.

Like France, the country is divided up into a number of prefectures, each being under the general control of a prefect, who is responsible to the Home Office or Ministry of the Interior. He is assisted by an elected prefectural assembly, but is not subordinate to it in purely administrative matters, though he must go to it for the new prefectural laws which it is empowered to pass, subject to the approval of the Home Office. The prefectural assembly provides the element of local representation, while the prefect representing the imperial authority, but spending his time in his prefecture, combines local knowledge with administrative experience and a sense of responsibility, not only to the people of his prefecture, but to the whole Japanese nation as represented by the Home Office at Tokyo. The whole system is a well-balanced combination of local and central authority, and promotes the interests of local territorial units while at the same time its machinery provides for a co-ordination of activity between different local units, and for the due subordination of local to national interests. It possesses the characteristics

of any sound administration, namely, unity of responsibility, subordination of authority, and co-ordination of function; it is not surprising that the Japanese made no attempt to imitate the welter of administrative institutions, central and local, which exists in the United Kingdom, and in which it is scarcely possible to trace any definite principles at all.

The Mayor of a Japanese city or town is an administrative expert appointed virtually by the Municipal Council for a term of years, and influenced by its advice, but subordinate in his purely administrative capacity to the local prefect, and ultimately to the Home Office. It is a curious thing that America, though that country provides illustrations of nearly every form of democratic disease, has in the case of a few of her cities adopted the principle of administration by a civic expert, and where it exists "graft" and corruption have disappeared and administrative efficiency has been the result. The difference is that such cities are the exception rather than the rule in America, whereas in Japan municipal corruption, or "rats under the altar" as it is called, is, according to Terry's guide-book, practically non-existent.

The people is naturally progressive and enterprising, and its efforts are facilitated by everything that a wise Government and a responsible administration can do. Japan is a country of rapidly developing resources. I have already referred to the very common use which is made of water-power for generating electricity, and thereby making possible everything for which a cheap supply of power is essential. In Great Britain and Ireland there are many places where large quantities of water are running idly to waste that might have been harnessed for some productive object. The difficulty is that any attempt to do so on a small scale would probably be defeated by vested interests well fortified by law, while to do so on a large scale would involve an Act of Parliament, which would probably cost considerably more than the undertaking itself.

In Japan, as in India, a general law lays down the conditions under which land may be acquired for public purposes, while the local administrative authority is empowered to apply its provisions to concrete cases when the need arises. We require a general law of this kind, but we require still more a complete reorganisation of our whole administrative system which will give us officials who are not mere automata, and to whom these and other general powers may safely be entrusted.

Japan has sat at the feet of Western nations to the extent of appropriating those portions of Western civilisation which she felt she required. It would be well for us to sit at the feet of Japan and try and develop something of the mental

and moral energy that her citizens possess, both individually and collectively, and, above all, something of the spirit of efficiency that characterises the whole civic organisation of that country.

### America.

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After spending a few months in the East, or rather the "Orient," as the Americans say, it is something of a shock to one to come alongside at San Francisco harbour and see white people doing heavy manual labour. I had almost forgotten about the existence of the "British workman" until I saw his American brother lifting heavy trunks and boxes and putting them ashore. Out in the East coolies do all that kind of thing, and the white man is no friend of either race who will attempt to do his own lifting and carrying. One instinctively takes all that for granted, and it certainly adds greatly to the comfort of existence, while the extra cost involved is very trifling. In India or China one can wear as many white suits per week as one likes and never feel the laundry bill, but in America, though the thermometer may be well above a hundred degrees, only a millionaire can afford such luxuries. From the point of view of comfort and many other things as well, the "Orient" is much to be preferred to the U.S.A. as a place to live or travel in.

The Americans are well "done for" in the matter of legislative assemblies, and they certainly have plenty of laws, though I never could discover any *law*, or at any rate any of the instinctive respect for law as such, which is characteristic of free, civilised countries.

Apparently there is a law that the feathers of wild birds must not be used as ornaments for ladies' hats. The object of this law is to prevent the destruction of certain species of the feathered creation, but to me it was infinitely more pathetic to witness the destruction of a little Dutch lady's hat by the ruthless removal on the part of Custom House officers of the single feather that adorned it. The feather was acquired in Java, but apparently it is desirable to prevent the extinction of wild birds there too, so far as the American Congress can do so. The Dutch lady thought it was an aigrette feather, but was not quite sure. If she had only thought it was an ostrich feather, and said so, the Custom House officers would probably have taken her word for it, and she might have saved her hat, as they did not seem to know the difference.

There is a law that you must not play cards in the train in Texas—as Mrs. Johnston discovered to her cost when she tried to play a harmless game of "patience" during my absence in the smoking-room. When we got to Oklahoma the ban was

lifted, and we were able to make up for lost time. According to our information, the dwellers in Texas may not play cards for more than three nights in succession in their own private houses, but I would like to know to what extent this part of the law is or can be enforced. When a Legislative Assembly consisting largely of amateurs without guidance by men of administrative experience is allowed to make whatever laws it likes, it is morally certain to stultify itself by making laws which cannot be enforced. Horse-racing is prohibited by law in every State of America except Maryland, and the result is that the whole of American racing is now concentrated in that State, and in a short time its whole population will probably be connected in one way or another with racing, and find it so profitable an occupation that another civil war will be necessary if it is desired to put a stop to it in that State as well. The only law that seems to command universal respect is "lynch law," and during our short stay in America the people of Georgia (I think it was Georgia) showed their respect for a decision of their elected Governor by "lynching" a man whose sentence of death he had commuted.

I dare say I am not the first who has remarked on the almost universal tendency existing in America to translate everything into terms of money in order to make it more readily intelligible. Anyhow, we soon began to understand that when the "Fifty Million Dollar Show" was referred to, the Panama-Pacific Exposition was meant. Almost the first thing we did after we landed in San Francisco and extricated ourselves from the red tape of the Customs regulations was to visit this show, and certainly it was well worth a visit and calculated to arouse other and more agreeable thoughts in one's mind than that of the amount of money it had cost to construct it. I will not enlarge on its many features except to say that it is a wonderful tribute to the enterprise of the American people, and shows what they can do when a number of leading citizens are united by a common purpose and are given free scope and money in plenty with which to carry out their ideas.

Like all exhibitions, it paints a very rosy picture of the country it is meant to "boost," and we soon found cause to discount many of the impressions we had formed from visiting it when we came to close quarters with the realities of American life itself.

I would advise all future Albert Kahn Fellows to jettison the greater part of their luggage before landing in America. We sent forward a good deal of ours in bond to New York—it costs 50 cents to have a trunk roped by a Customs officer at San Francisco—and we "checked" a considerable amount through in advance to Philadelphia. When we finally overtook it, it was scarcely worth redeeming, as it had been

running up charges against us at the rate of 10 cents. per package per day, including the day of its arrival.

We travelled by the Santa Fé route, and visited the Grand Canyon of Arizona. The latter is a cut in the earth's surface a mile deep and about 200 miles long, with the Colorado River flowing at the bottom. Curiously enough, I was not informed how many billion dollars it originally cost Nature to excavate it, but I dare say, if the amount could be "reckoned up," it would cause both the Panama-Pacific Exposition, and the artificial canyon it celebrates, to fade into complete insignificance!

Several branch canyons lead down to the Grand Canyon proper. "Bright Angel" trail follows one of the former from the railway terminus to the river, a distance of eight miles, and along this, "by zig-zag paths and juts of pointed rock," we descended to the muddy levels of the Colorado. At different stages in the descent the rocks are of different colour and character, and, according to the position of the sun in the heavens, different lights and shadows and different colour effects are produced, with the result that the whole scene is constantly changing, and every new appearance of the panorama seems more beautiful than the one that has just disappeared. It is a wonderful combination of all the beauties of painting, sculpture, and architecture, owing their form as well as their substance to Nature herself, and carried out on so vast a scale and with such elaboration and endless variety of detail as to defy description.

I believe there is nothing else of the kind in the world, but in America one is constantly coming across things that are characterised by an adjective in the superlative degree with the words "in the world" added. I began keeping a list of such things, but soon gave it up as a hopeless task. Anyhow, I believe they are right about the Grand Canyon, and it certainly deserves to rank with the Woolworth building in New York as unique of its kind in the world.

On our way back, before we had reached the top, darkness fell, and a storm of thunder and lightning came on. The reverberation of the former was intensified, as we were shut in on all sides by lofty rocks, but the latter proved rather useful, as the path was only a few feet wide, and it enabled us to see from time to time exactly how near we were to the side on which yawned the abyss. We had picked up one or two horseshoes in the hope that they might prove a potent charm to ward off German submarines on our way across the Atlantic, but when the lightning began to flash I distinctly remember dropping the horseshoes like the proverbial hot potato. On this occasion, at any rate, science won the victory over superstition.



When we arrived at the hotel, hungry and tired, the hotel attendants did not seem greatly concerned about our late arrival, and we realised more fully then what we had often thought before, that a guest in an American hotel is only a number and the cost of his room payable, as a rule, in advance.

American trains were a great disappointment. To begin with, the cost of travelling by train is atrociously high, and although in so democratic a country there is supposed to be only one class, if you want a Pullman or a Parlour or Observation car you can have it by paying extra. The seats are most uncomfortable, there is nowhere to put your feet or your luggage unless you are what is called a "seat-hog," in which case you turn the back of the seat in front away from you and put your feet or your luggage up on it—to the manifest rage of the other passengers if the carriage is at all crowded. If the windows are open, as the carriages are not divided into compartments, a smoke- and dust-laden breeze blows through the whole carriage, and after a day or two's travelling you feel as if you will not be presentable in decent society for a month. American trains start in a most awkward fashion. Suddenly, when you are least expecting it, the whole train gives a lurch forward and then stops, threatening to shake you out of your bunk if you happen to have gone there. Presently it starts again, this time fairly quietly, but once speed has been got up the shaking is pretty bad, and at night one's slumbers are liable to be fitful and disturbed. There seems to be great variations of temperature in different portions of America; the first night away from San Francisco we frizzled, and the next night we spent in the train we nearly froze.

American trains and railways seem to go everywhere, and not much regard is paid to public safety. Human life seems to be much less valuable in that country than time or money. Stations have no platforms in our or any other sense of the term, but, as every patron of the cinema knows, you climb from the ground up steps into your carriage. Sometimes you have to go over one or two lines of railway in order to reach the train you want to board, and in doing so it is well to look to the right and left and listen for the bell attached to the engine of an incoming train that gives warning of its approach. If another stationary train is between you and the one you want to get to, you have to go through the first in order to get to the second. Level crossings are everywhere preferred to bridges, and even in big towns the train seems to run along as well as across long streets. I believe the number of railway fatalities that takes place in America every year is very great, and Americans would do well to ponder the number of lives that could be saved by taking adequate

precautions in this matter. However, reform in this and in many other respects is difficult, if not impossible, in the democratic conditions of America. Some of the States are practically ruled by the railways, and the latter have experienced no difficulty in adapting the institutions of democracy to their own interests.

The express trains that cross the American continent in about three or four days leave nothing to be desired in point of speed or punctuality, but on one occasion, unless I have been misinformed, one of these was unavoidably delayed somewhere out west, owing to the economic exigencies of a truly democratic but rather anarchical agricultural population. It was harvest time, and the labour difficulty existed in such an acute form that the practical farmers of a certain district held up an express train and went through it offering any passenger seven and a half dollars a day who would come out and help them to save their crops. I do not know how many amateur agricultural labourers were secured in these circumstances, but I understand that when the farmers had got all they could, the train proceeded, and no punishment of any kind was meted out to them for their rather lawless conduct. This story may not be true in all particulars, but it is the kind of thing that could happen in America and nowhere else in the world.\*

The administration of law seems to be on the whole inefficient and very often absolutely corrupt. Americans elect their police magistrates for a term of years; the higher judicial offices are filled by nomination, in which political influences play their part. Our own method of appointing justices of the peace is manifestly absurd and does not secure either competence or impartiality; nor have we yet abandoned the objectionable principle of giving promotion to the Bench as a reward for political services. In our case, however, judges are above suspicion on the score of integrity, and on the whole display remarkably little political bias in their judicial utterances, in spite of their previous training as lawyer politicians. I am not blind to the other very serious defects of our judicial system, but the *personnel* of the American one seems to have all the weak points of our own without its integrity and impartiality, while the law there is just as much an affair of technicalities and forced interpretations as in this country, and judges as well as lawyers (in America) are said to have their price. A man who is sufficiently rich can usually get "justice" if he is willing to pay for it.

Owing to historical circumstances, over forty legislative assemblies have been let loose on America, and there is no effective co-ordination between them, while Congress is not in

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\* Trains are frequently held up with impunity in Ireland now. — May, 1920.

a position to exercise any adequate control. The whole theory of the American Republic is that certain specified functions are delegated to the Federal institutions, while the indeterminate balance of sovereignty remains vested in the different States. Some time ago a valuable illustration of the working of this principle was given when the State of California pursued a certain educational policy, with reference to Japanese settlers resident within its bounds, which caused the Foreign Office at Tokyo to make strong representations to Washington. The State of California was acting well within its rights, and Washington had no power to interfere, but in this case the action of a single State of the Union brought the whole of the United States within measurable distance of war, although no Federal institution had a vestige of responsibility in the matter. The U.S.A. cannot be referred to as a State without ambiguity, and it certainly is not a nation. Its vast size and the unequal distribution of the population destroys all real sense of community, whether political or social. Washington is not a centre of American public opinion, and neither Washington nor New York can be said to focus it to the extent to which Paris and London do that of France and England. The fact is, civic life revolves round local centres here and there throughout the whole country, and the average American citizen is more interested in the affairs of his city or State than he is in those of the Union. The first is not necessarily an unhealthy sign, but when it exists to such an extent as to impair the consciousness of national unity it is a source of serious weakness. With reference to the recent war, it was quite impossible in 1915 to say what was the opinion of the American nation, since there were as many opinions on this subject as nations in that country. Here and there in the Middle and Far West it would have been quite easy to convince oneself that America was solidly pro-German, but in the more thickly populated States of the East one would have arrived with equal conviction at the opposite conclusion. From the point of view of political development America is still at a low stage of evolution; she corresponds in biology to the lower forms of organism in which subordinate centres of innervation retain a large degree of independence, and the brain or central nervous system is relatively undeveloped.\*

The political difficulties caused by the existence of so many legislative assemblies with equal jurisdiction are more apparent in domestic than in foreign affairs. Needless to say, the lawyers benefit very largely by the legal confusion that sometimes results from the fact that the relations of human beings to one another in adjacent territories tend to

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\* Doubtless America's eventual participation in the war has "changed all that."—December, 1919.

ignore the existence of State boundaries. A case occurred in which a few thousand dollars was bequeathed to someone, and before he could take out probate of the will, as the property was held in eight different States, the lawyers had to look up the laws of all the different States, as well as the Federal laws dealing with the point, and not only that, but Federal judicial rulings and State judicial rulings had to be consulted as well, so that in the end it is doubtful if the "beneficiary" benefited by a very large sum.

Philadelphia proper is in the State of Pennsylvania, but the actual city has spread across the river Delaware into the State of New Jersey. A ferry-boat crosses about every minute, linking up at both sides of the river with train or tram services. Individual States seem to have their respective Public Services Commissions, which have the power to control rates and fares. An application for an increase of rates was refused by the Public Services Commission of New Jersey, but granted by that of Pennsylvania—a State in which the railroad interests are very strong. The result is that if you are travelling, say, from Palmyra in New Jersey to the Pennsylvania side of the river, you can book through for about twenty cents, but if you attempt to book through from the latter point to Palmyra, you must pay about thirty cents. In practice, what you do when crossing from the Pennsylvania side is to book a ferry ticket for a few cents and then buy another ticket on the other side, thereby saving the difference. On the way back only one booking is necessary. On the Pennsylvania side there are two booking offices, one for the ferry service and one for through booking. Needless to say, the former gets all the business, while I have never seen anyone buying a ticket at the other except on the solitary occasion when, in my ignorance, I bought tickets there myself.

. Americans travelling in Europe generally succeed in giving the impression that their country is a very fine and well-governed one. I thought I knew a good deal about America before going there, but some of the things that astonished me most when there were things that no American I had previously met ever thought of telling me. Very probably Americans at home get used to these anomalies and simply take them for granted.

Anyhow, it surprised me very much to learn that there is no National Telegraph or Telephone Service in America, or for that matter in Canada either. At least two telegraph and two telephone companies exist whose operations cover a large portion of the country. In the case of telegraph companies, the largest cities are served by more than one, but in out-of-the-way places only one telegraph company will be found in operation. The result is that if you send a wire by one company to a town or village that is served by another,

your wire will simply not get there. It will get to the nearest point to which it can go by the first service, and the telegraph operator there, as a matter of grace, may telephone its contents to the person to whom it is addressed, but that is obviously an impossibility if that person is not "on the telephone."

Philadelphia is served by two separate telephone companies, the "Rock" and the "Bell." I remember the names well, as I had the misfortune to try to ring up a man on the one system who happened to be on the other. The result in this case is that if a man wants to speak to everybody he must run two telephones and pay two telephone subscriptions. \* I wonder that the American public "stands for" that.

The need for reform is obvious, but the difficulties in its way are very great. Each separate telegraph or telephone company has its charter from some one State or other, though its actual operations may cover many States. To nationalise either system would probably require the consent of the individual States from which the different companies had obtained their charters, since in a "free" country like America nothing so tyrannical as compulsion, even in the public interest, can be applied to such States, apart from the fact that it is probably constitutionally impossible. Besides, State Governments are often under the absolute control of the very interests whose operations it is desirable to regulate or put an end to altogether. Democratic institutions in America, so far from securing real freedom and the possibility of national progress, have too often only succeeded in providing private interests of various kinds with the necessary machinery for holding the public in bondage and sacrificing its interests to their own.

Carrying companies have attained considerable development in America, but the only harmony that characterises their activities is that they are all agreed about the desirability of fleecing the public. The tourist with too much luggage is absolutely at their mercy, and that is why I recommend all travellers to America to leave their luggage at home or drop it in the sea. It will probably be cheaper in the end! The carrying companies are hand in glove with the railway companies, and very often control the left luggage offices at the various railway stations. You pay 35 cents per package to get the smallest piece of luggage transferred the shortest distance. Different areas are served by different companies, and it is sometimes a matter of difficulty and expense to get luggage taken from one such area into another. The carrying company that held our luggage in pawn at a railway station in Philadelphia was unable to deliver it at Palmyra, New Jersey, although the latter place is only an outlying suburb of Philadelphia. In order to get it there I should

have had to pay toll to that company to bring it to the premises of another which did serve Palmyra, and then pay toll once more to the second company to get it to Palmyra.

Fortunately, a north of Ireland friend, who is now an American citizen, and for whose sake I can forgive America much, lent me the use of his city offices in which to store our luggage, so that we had the satisfaction of preventing a certain amount of money from swelling the coffers of the carrying companies.

The Parcels Post is a time-honoured institution in this country, but, incredible as it may seem, in America it owes its existence to the present administration. Before that time people had to use one or other of the carrying companies, and every parcel, however small, cost 35 cents to transport. I understand, however, that the letter post has been a national service in the U.S.A. for quite a considerable time!

Another piece of advice I would give to my successors, and that is to beware of journalists when in America. Unfortunately, it is impossible to take this advice, as every American to whom one makes the most innocent remark is probably a journalist, and the chances are that your supposed sentences, if not your actual photograph, will figure prominently in the local papers.

When we were in Washington, where we spent about three days, we were the guests of an institution called the Southern Commercial Congress; this organisation has undertaken the work of social and economic regeneration in the southern States, and certainly its activities cover a portion of America where great natural resources are relatively undeveloped, and there are good grounds for believing that its efforts will meet with a large measure of success. We have the most pleasant recollections of our stay in the Federal capital, and this was largely due to the efforts of our friends there to make our visit interesting and instructive. It had, however, an unlooked-for sequel, the true inwardness of which was afterwards explained by the chief culprit, whom, however, I readily forgave. When we had safely returned to Ireland he sent me cuttings from leading Washington papers, in one of which I read, to my amazement, the following headings of a supposed interview with me:—

“Gives First Place to ‘City Manager.’”

“Joseph Johnston, British Visitor, has been Studying Municipal Governments.”

“Lack of Franchise here a Cause of Amazement.”

“Cannot Understand why People of Capital Submit to Loss of Vote.”

After reading his covering letter, amazement gave way to amusement. It is only poetic justice to quote the portion of his letter that deals with it.

"Several days ago I mailed you a clipping from the Washington Press of the notice I gave out concerning your brief visit. It attracted the attention of the editors of the Washington *Star*, the leading evening paper in Washington, and they sent a man here to secure an interview from you. You had been gone several days, however, when this was done. They then insisted that I write up the story and let them have it for the Sunday edition. I may possibly have failed to mention to you that I am the associate editor of the Petersburg *Index-Appeal*, and a special newspaper representative, among other things. This will account for the enclosed 'interview'!

"I hope that you will not be dismayed by the things I have made you say in the 'interview,' for you have suddenly become a very popular and much respected 'municipal expert' here in Washington! Following the publication of my story in the Sunday *Star*, the Washington *Post*—the leading Washington paper—came out the next morning with the editorial, 'As Others See Us,' which was followed the same evening by the Washington *Times* with the editorial, 'The Voteless City.'

"I am sending all of these to you, for you may wish to show some of your Dublin friends these bits of evidence of the high esteem in which you are held in America. Really, I hope that you won't mind."

What actually happened was that I discussed various public questions in which we were both interested, and our views on many points coincided. With regard to American Municipal Administration, I held that it was, generally speaking, corrupt, at any rate in the big cities. I had only just heard of the "city manager" form of administration, and it was only yesterday that I really learnt what its essential features are. My interlocutor, however, with something of prophetic inspiration, speaking in my person, has in many cases actually anticipated the views I have subsequently formed! When, however, the Washington *Post* refers to me in an editorial as "civic and economic expert of England," I wonder whether the utterance is similarly inspired, as it certainly is not true as a matter of present-day fact!

When I found attributed to me in this "interview" an intimate acquaintance with the municipal affairs of Dayton and Springfield, Ohio, places whose names I never remember having seen before, it would have been difficult not to be amused.

I had made a few casual remarks about the administration of the civic affairs of Washington, D.C., but they were of the nature of an *argumentum ad hominem*. It appears that Washington is administered by what are called District Commissioners appointed by the President, and the people who live there, though they pay all local and Federal taxes, have no say in either municipal or Federal government, and, needless to say, as the "District of Columbia" is Federal and not State territory, they have no State rights either. As a matter of fact, Washington is very well administered indeed, and it would be a good thing for the inhabitants of cities like New York and Chicago if their cumbersome and corrupt systems of municipal administration were supplanted by something more akin to that in existence in Washington.

What I actually pointed out was the inconsistency with which the very principle which America had resisted in her fight for independence has been deliberately imposed on the inhabitants of the Federal capital. This happens to be a favourite journalistic grievance in Washington, hence the editorial comments, one of which begins as follows:—

"AS OTHERS SEE US.

"Even under the casual inspection of Joseph Johnson, civic and economic expert of England, who is visiting Washington, the form of government which prevails in the district presents a situation that is unique. Coming from an empire to a republic, whose fight for freedom was waged upon the theory that there should be no taxation without representation, Mr. Johnson observes that:

"While the government of Washington is possibly very efficient under the District Commissioners, I cannot comprehend, however, why the President and the Congress of the United States should be vested with the right to constitute the municipal government and deny the taxpayers any right to participation.'"

I am afraid the standard of American journalism is not very high, and it cannot be accused of too strict a regard for accuracy of statement. In argument it is not above going on the principle that "any stick is good enough to beat a dog with." Even the best American papers go in more or less for sensationalism, and the worst for nothing else. I wonder does the American democracy take its Press seriously. If it does it must be the most gullible public on earth. Seriously speaking, it is a radical defect in all modern democracy that the Press—the chief means of publicity—is absolutely subservient to private interests of one kind or other, and cannot be trusted to express an honest opinion on any public question, for the simple reason that it has always an axe of its own to grind. A well-informed public opinion is



generally considered to be desirable in a democratic State, but the public cannot be well informed if the sources from which it derives its information are polluted.

Every vice of democracy as we know it at home exists in an aggravated form in America. The Anglo-Saxon race may possibly be able to govern coloured races, but it has not yet learnt either at home or in America how to govern itself, and, needless to say, it has never succeeded in governing Ireland, and never will.

America, however, is a very interesting country from the point of view of the student of politics. Every variety of political disease can be studied to advantage there; in fact, it is a kind of pathological museum of democracy. The Americans, however, are fond of making experiments, and occasionally their experiments in the sphere of politics lead to valuable results. I do approve of the "city manager" form of municipal administration, though I doubt whether the system will ever be applied in that country as widely as it deserves to be. The historic forms of city government were cumbrous and unwieldy to a degree.

An elected council was collectively responsible for the administration. Certain subordinate officials were directly elected by the citizens, and were supposed to be responsible to the electors. Co-ordination of function, subordination of authority, unification of responsibility, in fact, every principle of a sound administration, was and is conspicuous by its absence. Collective responsibility means individual irresponsibility, since you cannot hold a thing really responsible which has not got "either a body to be kicked or a soul to be damned." Responsibility to an unorganised electorate is virtual irresponsibility to the public and complete subservience to the political machine to which an elected official owes his elevation. When administrative officials owe their position to a direct vote of the electorate, they are not in practice amenable to discipline on the part of the supreme municipal authority to which in theory they are subordinate. Collective administration by a municipal council is indefensible in theory, in practice is unworkable, is likely to lead to stagnation and inefficiency, and if the *personnel* of the council is that way inclined, opens wide the door to corruption and maladministration of every kind. The idea that the complicated affairs of a modern city can be adequately administered by a number of elected amateurs in their *spare time* is manifestly absurd. Under the most favourable of circumstances, as each one of these has his own private affairs to attend to, he can only give a half-hearted and spasmodic attention to the management of affairs that really require the concentrated attention of a disinterested expert. In practice, of course, everything really devolves on the permanent

officials, but the council is in theory responsible not only for policy, but for administration, so that a fatal division takes place between the responsibility of the council on the one hand and the actual power of the permanent officials on the other. If the *personnel* of the council is vicious, as it too often is, its members simply regard their position as a means of forwarding their private interests, and "log rolling" is the result.

In defiance of all past and present experience, the idea seems to persist in the Anglo-Saxon mind that the public interest can be arrived at by taking a kind of arithmetic mean of the private interests of a number of elected "representatives," but to entertain such an idea is surely nothing short of political imbecility. Representation of some kind is, of course, necessary, and a municipal council may safely be allowed to determine the general lines of policy, but the responsibility for actual administration, where the danger of log-rolling is greatest, should be delegated to a single municipal expert appointed by the council or some other authority, but with security of tenure, once appointed, and on no account owing his position to popular election. The proper function of a council, and the only function it is capable of performing, is to deliberate and control policy. The management of affairs ought to be delegated to an individual or a hierarchy of individuals.

These principles have been applied in the "city-manager" form of municipal administration that certain American towns and cities have adopted. It is really the application of the ordinary principles of business organisation to civic affairs. Just as the shareholders in a company elect a board of directors, who appoint an expert as manager, while they only retain in their own hands the general control of policy and the right to dismiss him if he does not give satisfaction, so the citizens in this case elect, often by a system of proportional representation, a council which in its turn appoints a civic expert as city manager, while they content themselves with the representation of what they believe to be the opinions of the electorate and with the control of policy in its interests, retaining, however, the right to dismiss their city manager if he does not prove a success. The latter is not necessarily a citizen of the city he administers; and in point of fact the creation of this position has brought about the existence of a new profession, whose members have every inducement for the cultivation of personal efficiency, owing to the relative permanence of their means of livelihood and the possibility of promotion by way of transfer from one city to a more lucrative city managership in another.

This system has only been in operation for a very few years, but already substantial savings in the cost of administration

have been reported by the cities that have tried it. It seems likely to lead to greater efficiency as well as economy, but I am not yet in a position to substantiate this view on *à posteriori* as well as *à priori* considerations. In only one case up to 1914 has it been applied to a city with a population of more than 100,000; and there are reasons for proceeding cautiously in its application to cities of a very large population, especially if they have behind them a tradition of municipal corruption. A system of administration is usually no better than the men who work it, though some systems bring out all that is worst in men and others encourage them to develop their better qualities; that is the only reason why people should bother about devising systems of this kind at all. A system that worked well in Dayton, Ohio, might work badly in New York, and instead of the city manager you might have the city boss. All the same, I think the arguments are all in favour of having a simple, business-like organisation of municipal government even in New York. The confusion of powers and responsibilities in the existing system enables the forces of evil, so to speak, to take cover, and if the enemy could be compelled to come out in the open by the establishment of a system in which it would be easy to fix responsibility, he would be more than half defeated already. Arising out of that, I understand that on one occasion the citizens of New York by a stupendous effort elected a decent Mayor, but, although he did his best, he could not control his subordinates (whom he had no power to appoint or dismiss), and the latter deliberately made things much worse than before in order to make his mayoralty unpopular and prevent his re-election. In this they succeeded, and New York reverted to a *régime* that was still corrupt, but not corrupt beyond the limit of human endurance.

### Conclusion.

We have surveyed the world, metaphorically speaking, from China to Peru, and a miscellaneous variety of subjects has from time to time occupied our attention.

We have discussed mankind as a social animal, and found that the modern device of political democracy, which is also very ancient, has up to the present failed to fulfil expectations.

If we cast our eyes backward over the pages of history we find that the political follies with which we are painfully familiar were characteristic of the Jews of Isaiah's time and the Athens of Demosthenes. The false prophets who said, "Peace, peace, when there is no peace," and were blind to the menace of Assyria; the demagogues who lulled the Athenians into a false sense of security while Philip of

Macedon was consolidating his power; the English politicians who pretended that the German menace did not exist; their successors in more recent days who, in deference to popular clamour, undertook to "make the Hun pay" a substantial part of the costs of the war, knowing well that this was an impossibility, besides being a breach of public faith in view of the terms on which Germany had agreed to surrender—all these belong to precisely the same class, and owe their power for evil to similar weaknesses and follies in the character of the unorganised and undisciplined masses.

To the cynically minded it might well appear that there is no such thing as human progress, or rather that the "progress" is of a circular character, and that mankind simply repeats the follies and disasters of past generations on a vaster scale and with ever greater destruction of human happiness. "The lesson of history is that men never learn from history."

The truth is that political democracy, so far from being a heaven-sent instrument for bringing about an ideal constitution of human society, is a form of government that would only work tolerably well if the constitution of society were already, owing to other causes, approximating to the ideal. Its present popularity is due to the fact that in comparatively recent times society was divided into two well-defined classes, the oppressors and the oppressed. The issues were simple and comparatively easily understood, and the widening of the franchise enabled very valuable reforms, like those affecting land tenure in Ireland or the conditions of factory labour in England, to be carried. In the latter case, however, it should be noted that the oppressors in England were also divided into two well-defined classes, the landed aristocracy and the commercial classes, and the very human tendency to pull the beam out one's brother's eye, resulting in the mote being removed from one's own eye by the irate brother, has materially assisted the cause of reform in England. Since then in England a marked interpenetration of interests between the commercial classes and the squirearchy has taken place, and the industrial classes have developed strongly particularist tendencies, and are inclined to regard their own supposed interests as the only thing that matters.\* In Ireland the problem of land tenure has given place to the problem of organising the business side of agriculture, affecting a new set of vested interests, but raising issues which are much less intelligible to the democratic mind.

The simple creed of political democracy which supposes that Ministers really *are* responsible to Parliament and Parliament to the electorate, and that in the long run the

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\* There are signs that this is no longer the case, if indeed it ever was—Jan. 1920.

"general will" of the latter is really carried out, requires considerable revision if it is to be made to fit the facts of modern life.

Both the theory and practice of political democracy are open to severe criticism. The State is a highly complicated organism, and the conditions affecting its health or disease are obviously a matter for expert investigation and control. The ordinary individual would scarcely have a tooth pulled except by an expert, but in his capacity as a citizen, in company with some millions of others whose average intelligence is not very high, he is supposed to be able to decide the most complicated and difficult questions of national policy, and that too with very inadequate, and often false and contradictory, information to depend on.

Of course, in practice he has to delegate his power, but as he has no means of independent judgment about the issue set forth, and must choose one or other of the candidates put forward by the various party machines, and as, further, he knows nothing whatever about the personal character and private interests of the different candidates, the only thing he is influenced by in making his choice is the plausibility with which his favourite candidate commends himself to him and the inherited or acquired prejudice he has in favour of the particular "principles" that candidate is supposed to stand for.

There is no guarantee under the present system that the views of the electorate really are represented, but even if they were representative democracy would be far from ideal. National government ought really to be the business of disinterested experts influenced, but not controlled, by a representative assembly. Public opinion ought to be a very important factor in influencing their decisions, but it ought not to be the only factor. If a hundred million people believed that the sun goes round the earth, their opinion would not weigh for a moment against that of a competent astronomer to the contrary. Yet under the conditions of representative democracy the fact that a majority is supposed to desire it is considered a sufficient justification for doing something, however foolish.\*

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\* I fear I have pressed the analogy of the "expert" too far. The essential freedom of the individual reveals itself in the fact that he willingly places himself under the care of his medical or other expert adviser, and willingly carries out his injunctions. The essential freedom of the community will be sacrificed if its political and other experts are "on top as well as on tap," to quote a characteristic phrase of A.E. What we have to aim at is a condition of human society in which disinterested experts will be available and in a position to give, without fear or favour, advice that will be listened to, while the people for their part owing to a self-imposed discipline, will not be offended by plain speaking, and will normally be inclined to follow such advice, but are free to go their own way if they prefer it.

If modern democracy were capable of producing real leaders who would express the highest of its ill-defined ideals and set their faces like flint against gratifying the lower instincts of its nature, there would be more to be said in its favour. But, as we all know, a leader of this type would soon find himself a voice crying in the wilderness, and the ordinary politician has no hesitation in making his choice between political suicide and the sacrifice of everything to popular favour, this being the royal road to place and power. The passions and prejudices of the mob are more easily stirred than its higher instincts, and form a stronger driving power behind the "leader" who is successful in symbolising them in his person. This force, however, is one which can be aroused but not controlled, and the politician who depends on it is like a man sitting in a boat above the Falls of Niagara without sails, oars, or rudder, who only realises his real powerlessness when he is face to face with the impending calamity. Unfortunately, the simile is misleading, for it is generally his country, and not the political leader, that is precipitated into the abyss.

Political democracy by itself, while the economic organisation of society is anti-democratic, is apt to be the exact opposite of what it seems, and we have seen in the case of America how easily its forms adapt themselves to a *régime* that is really plutocratic. Political equality is meaningless, and a real sense of community cannot develop where the principle "Every man for himself and the devil take the hindmost" is the only one recognised in the economic sphere. Where men are bound together by a sense of common economic interests they are usually very careful in the choice of the individuals to whom managerial authority is delegated. If the co-operative organisation of the wealth-producing and distributing activities of society were more general, the ideal of human brotherhood might be realised in a social structure whose foundations thus rested in the common but solid earth of a conscious identity of material interests. In choosing political representatives, the people would have before them the record of those who had served them well in their Co-operative Society or Federation, they would vote for such a candidate with full knowledge of his character and full confidence that he would adequately represent their interests, since they would be identical with his own, and incidentally these would be indistinguishable from those of the community as a whole. Plato was right when he based the unity of the State on unity of economic interest, though the methods by which this result was to be achieved made too great demands on human nature.

All the strictures of the same political philosopher against the democracy of his day are equally applicable to the democracy of ours. The conduct of individuals, he says, who had

ruined their health through lack of self-restraint, but regarded as their greatest enemy the doctor who told them they could not get well until they gave up their drunkenness and debauchery, would be considered "very charming"; but States do act like individuals, and that is precisely the kind of thing that democratic States do. Those who seek to effect a fundamental reform are hounded out of political life, "while anyone who can serve them most agreeably under their existing polity, and curry favour by fawning on them and anticipating their wishes, being also clever in satisfying their wishes, he, forsooth, will be esteemed an excellent man and full of profound wisdom, and will be honoured at their hands." In effect, the people of such a State, in the words of Isaiah, "say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits," and the result is that political demagogues of this class, like the false prophets that Jeremiah refers to, "have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace."

Plato's dictum that good government is impossible until "the philosophers become rulers or the rulers philosophers" sounds fantastic and absurd in our modern ears. But if we ignore the traditional translation of the words actually used by Plato, and, expressing in ordinary English what he really meant, say that until the wise and good become rulers or the rulers become wise and good, real reform is impossible, the phrase sounds almost like a truism. This may be taken to express the ideal of scientific government, or "Epistemonocracy" as I have called it, though perhaps a better term would be "Phronimocracy," the "Phronimos" being the nearest Aristotelian equivalent of our "practical idealist."

Hitherto I have discussed these questions from a purely theoretical point of view, and I am quite aware that much that has been said is not "practical politics." If we get down to practical considerations we shall find, I think, that democracy as it exists at present is susceptible of a certain amount of modification in the direction of scientific government. In the last resort, an elected Parliament of some sort or other must and will retain legislative sovereignty and the ultimate control of administration.\*

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\* Parliament would be much more representative, better informed, and more powerful, if the principle of the representation of the people by professions or occupations was adopted. Of course there would remain the opposition between Capital and Labour, but the government of the day might as well negotiate with these rival bodies inside the house as outside it, and the present divorce between power and responsibility would be ended and an atmosphere of greater reality introduced into Parliamentary debates, if Capital no longer depended for its political power on the use of "back stairs methods," and Labour came to regard the House of Commons as an efficient substitute

Like Plato, we must regard the character of our educational institutions as of vital importance to the welfare of the State.

Generally speaking they are, in my humble opinion, more than worthy of the country to which they belong, and it is not their fault if they are of greater potential than actual value. If the "butchers and bakers and candlestick makers" could be removed from the control they exercise by virtue of their "representative" character over certain educational institutions in England to a more appropriate sphere of usefulness, it would be a step in the right direction, and if so-called "national" education in Ireland were really national and undenominational, our most acute political problem would in course of time receive an automatic solution. Greater attention might be paid in our schools and colleges to subjects of social and economic importance, like Economics and Civics, and they ought to be studied from a practical and human as well as from a theoretical or "academic" point of view. Pupils and students should be familiarised with existing institutions of government and administration, and as everything English has a history behind it, the study of that subject could be made most interesting if curiosity could be aroused about everyday institutions that are often taken for granted. A most interesting historical discourse could, for instance, be based on the title "Justice of the Peace." If the ordinary citizen really understood how the machine of government and administration works, his blind impatience at its clumsiness and inefficiency would give place to an intelligent desire to have it simplified and made more efficient. Candidates for Civil Service positions at home should be required to show their proficiency in subjects of social and economic interest. I have frequently referred to the desirability of introducing the principles of territorial subdivision

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- for the "direct action" which under present conditions is its only effective weapon. The cleavage in Parliament would disappear if, by one or other of the various methods proposed, the democratic control of industry could be secured. In that event a large measure of self-government might be allowed to remain with various voluntary associations of citizens economic and otherwise, and Parliament might then content itself with the management of common national interests, the only work for which it is likely ever to be competent.

If the opposition between Capital and Labour could be abolished by the "integration of industry" under democratic control, the absurd idea that one man's gain means another's loss would tend to disappear. The various self-governing industrial groups would realise that they can only further their own special interests in the long run by methods which incidentally make a contribution to the common good of all. Their representatives in Parliament, being well informed about these special interests and the true method of promoting them, would be wise advisers about questions affecting the common interest, and the nature of the latter in any concrete case would be an easy inference from the many-sided wisdom and experience of the various representatives of the former. January, 1920.



and deconcentration in our national administration. The administrative head of each province or district should be given the same security of tenure as a judge, and the same right to criticise freely whatever he sees amiss in the national life and the doings of the politicians. Collectively they should form a kind of Royal Commission in constant session, and should draw the attention of Government and the public to needed reforms before the problems that require solution have become acute. Statesmanship ought not to content itself with the removal of grievances of long standing, when they have already begun to threaten social stability; it ought to endeavour to foresee the probable effect of existing tendencies, and if they give rise to legitimate concern to guide them in salutary directions. Officials with the administrative instinct in an independent position might be expected to be perfectly disinterested, and to be able to envisage a problem as it affects the community as a whole, and not merely the fortunes of a political party. If they were allowed to criticise publicly and with equal freedom the views expressed by politicians on both sides, political controversies would tend to become more real, and the expression of moderate, disinterested, and scientific opinion would probably attract such a volume of support from the people generally as would induce the extremists on both sides to moderate their zeal. An institution of this kind would fulfil the function of a fly-wheel in the reciprocating engine of party government and prevent the alternate rushings to and fro of the political cranks from shaking the whole national structure to pieces. At any rate, it is certainly about time that administrative experts were allowed to instruct the public as well as the amateurish ignorance of their political departmental chiefs.

This they would have to do largely through the medium of the Press, and, as they would have to be really able men, editors would probably regard the written expression of their views as good "copy." If so, the public might at last be able to read something really disinterested in the pages of its otherwise rather unedifying newspapers.\*

I conclude by quoting a portion of Professor H. Stanley Jevons' remarks in his inaugural address as University Professor at Allahabad. I am afraid that I shall appear, consciously or unconsciously, to have plagiarised many of his ideas, but I take this opportunity of acknowledging my

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\* I still think that an institution like the French Council of State, mainly consisting of administrative experts, whose business it is to review in a judicial atmosphere the various political proposals of the government of the day, would serve an excellent purpose in our political life, but I doubt whether the suggestion outlined in the text could be adopted in that extreme form without giving rise to greater evils than it would remove

indebtedness to this able exponent of economic science. What he said certainly set me thinking, and I hope that by giving his views a wider publicity in the pages of this Report the same effect will be produced on many others. He mentions the difficulty that would be experienced in England if an attempt was made to replace our cumbrous copper pennies by coins of equal value, but less burdensome to carry. I am sorry he did not call attention to the fact that we are almost alone in the civilised world in not having introduced the metric system in money, weights, and measures.\* Both these are reforms which would redound to the advantage of the whole community; but unfortunately they would gain no votes, though they might lose a few, and that is the crucial consideration. Democracy, like hedonism, always sacrifices the greater but more remote good to the gratification of the moment. But let Mr. Jevons speak for himself—and me:—

#### “DEMOCRACY AND BUREAUCRACY.

“In every country where an elected Parliament is supreme and controls the Cabinet, legislation proceeds by means of a contest or balance of conflicting interests. In actually drafting a particular Bill, technical experts, such as engineers, lawyers, and so forth, are, of course, consulted; but experts in the science and art of economics are not called in although they could give most valuable advice as to the general policy of a Bill and as to the ulterior economic effects of the proposed legislation. That aspect of the matter is usually ignored.

“The contesting parties who force their claims on the Government in power will have nothing to do with economics unless they can use it, or pervert the statements of its professors, to strengthen their case. The particular interests that secure the introduction of a Bill know their own immediate object and how they wish to attain it, and they are impatient of a science which they do not understand presuming to tell them their own business and warn them of possible evil after-effects. The position of the Government, unless it happens to have a great majority, does not enable it to consider in a scientific manner the general trend of its economic policy. It is more generally engaged in acting as an arbitrator between opposing factions on questions which continually force themselves to the front, and in recording as laws the best compromises it can effect.

“A democracy is an inchoate mass which struggles forward slowly in the improvement of its own condition by a prodigious amount of effort in propaganda and conflict. It is

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\* On my way round the world the only coinage I could never get used to was that of the country to which I returned.

always an immediate grievance which interests the mass of the people, and in proportion as the franchise is widened and the voters actually control the legislature so does the latter become increasingly conservative in temperament. It merely registers in its acts the changes already brought about by industrial and social development. It cannot lead or direct national progress.

"A truly democratic Government is almost devoid of initiative, whether in developing the resources of the State or in improving the condition of the people. The people at large will not willingly accept a temporary small sacrifice in money, and particularly in change of habits, in order to reap much benefit for the nation a few years later. Not one elector in a hundred can understand a scientific argument; consequently, every reform the benefit of which can only be realised by a trained mind must either be rushed through Parliament before the public can fully realise what is being done, or be abandoned. In England the National Health Insurance Act and the Daylight Saving Bill are cases in point.

"Let me take a very practical example to illustrate what I mean. We have in India the most scientific coin of small denomination I have ever seen in any country—the one anna nickel piece. It is just the right size and weight, and the lobes on the edge make it easily distinguishable by feel from any other coin. You know what a big, cumbersome bronze coin the English penny of the same value is. I have often thought whether I would try to start a movement in England to alter the penny to a small nickel coin like the anna, but have decided it is not worth the labour, the chances of success being so small. Having formed a special association for propaganda, and having got a number of organisations to support the change, there would arise an overwhelming opposition composed of the financial interests connected with the automatic machine companies, the unreasoning prejudice of the public, and ridicule of the comic papers. So that a simple reform, which can be accomplished by a stroke of the pen in India, is a work of such magnitude in England that no individual and no Government cares to take the initiative. If one goes from such a simple question as this to the reforms of an economic character affecting the wages and social organisation of the people, in which science may show that it is advantageous the Government should interfere, what chance is there in a democracy of anything but the slowest progress? Is it possible to make many millions of electors understand complicated economic questions? In Australia and New Zealand, which have the most intelligent electorate in the world, there are more mistakes made in economic legislation than in most countries—I suppose because a little knowledge

is a dangerous thing—and the bulk of electors, and even the majority of members of Parliament, chosen for their powers of oratory and not for their wisdom, know very little of economics.

"In the Chair I held at Cardiff it was my duty to lecture on political theory as well as economics, and I have taken every opportunity of observing party government at work in England, Australia, and America. As a result I say without hesitation that a bureaucracy advised by scientific experts consulting with representatives of all classes and sections of the people, but not controlled by them, is the type of government which will ensure the most safe and rapid progress.

"The principal merit of a popularly elected Parliament is that it acts as a check upon a Government which may make mistakes through ignorance, or is negligent in the discharge of its trust, or has not really the interests of the people at heart. In the past a popularly elected assembly has been a necessary, although always a clumsy, form of check. But now the developments of the human sciences, particularly economics and sociology, is for the first time in the world's history making the scientific form of government possible."

While I agree with this indictment of modern "democracy," I am not so certain as I was four years ago that a bureaucracy of the type that prevails in India is a desirable alternative, while I am as certain now as I was then that the open adoption of such a form of government in these islands is not practical politics.

I have already indicated the extent to which it is both possible and desirable to go by way of securing some of the advantages characteristic of the Indian system of administration. But the heart of the problem is not administrative. It is political, economic, and ethical. Administrative questions are questions of means. Questions of ends are much more difficult, and in the nature of the case much more important.

The end of government is to realise or make possible the realisation of the greatest good of all. When it is clearly seen that good government is rather a condition than a cause of the progress of the race in the things that are really "worth while," and that its maximum contribution to this is in most cases to clear the way and afterwards get out of the way, people will expect less from governments and be more likely to get what they expect.

When the State thus limits its functions to those few things which it is really competent to deal with, and allows voluntary associations of its citizens complete liberty within the sphere of the interests which they are associated to promote, whether

these interests are economic or non-economic, the State, confining itself to the task of ensuring that the ends which each group sets before it are not inconsistent with the good of all, then the conditions under which scientific government is possible will have come into existence. For the scope of governmental action will be considerably lessened, its objects will be reduced in number and simplified, and the best method of adapting means to ends will readily suggest itself.

With regard to such voluntary associations, since they are *ex hypothesi* conscious of a common end, the best methods of promoting it will be adopted as a matter of course. A joint stock company is a voluntary association of people who are conscious of a common end—profit making. They show no reluctance to adopt the methods which they think most likely to secure it.

When the spirit of mutual service has exorcised the demon of private profiteering, and the economic system is moralised and purged of its anti-social features, we may expect the same scientific application of the means necessary for the promotion of common economic interests. But moral ends will no longer be sacrificed to economic goods, and the latter, both in their production and use, will subserve the higher purposes of human life.

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